

THE  
REWARD OF  
RELIGION.

DELIVERED IN SVNDRIE  
LECTURES VPON THE  
BOOKE OF  
RVTH.

Wherein the Godly may see  
their daily both inward and outward  
trialls, with the presence of God to assist  
*them, and his mercies to recom-  
pence them.*

LVC. 12. 32.

*Feare not little flock, for it is your Fathers will  
to giue you a Kingdome.*

Cyprian in the end of the 6. Epist. lib. 4.

*Dearely beloued Brethren, let this be rooted in your hearts, let this  
be the preparation of your weapons, let this be your Meditation  
day and night to set before your eies, and consider with minde  
and senses, the punishments of the wicked, with the rewards & de-  
serts of the righteous: what penaltie he threatneth to them that de-  
nie him, & what glorie he promiseth to them which confesse him.*

Newly corrected and augmented.

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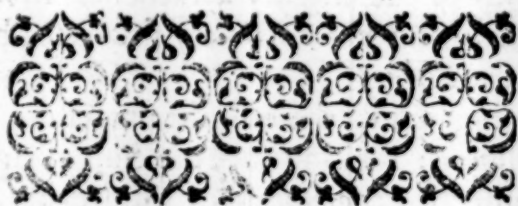
L O N D O N,

Printed by W. Stansby and are to bee sold by Iohn  
Budge at his shops at the South dore of *Pauis*,  
and at Brittaines Burse. 1613.

*Vet A2 f. 76*







TO THE RIGHT  
Honourable, vertuous and  
Christian Lady, the Lady M<sup>A</sup>R-  
GARET, *Barronnesse Dacre of the South,*  
grace, mercy and peace, be multiplied in  
*this life present, and eternall felicity in*  
*the life to come.*



Ight Honorable La-  
dy, it is reported that  
the inhabitants of the  
mountaine Cassius  
by *Seleucia*, at the third  
watch of the night do  
behold the Globe of  
the Sunne: so that on  
the one side they see our accustomed dark-  
nesse, covering the face of the whole earth,  
on the other side the glistering beames of  
the shining light, displaying these sha-  
dowes-

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dowes of the nightly darkenesse. In my opinion this hill doth very fitly resemble the excellency of the word of God, and the inhabitants thereof, the professors of Religion: for long since the Sun of righteousness, the Sonne of God departed from the sight of the world, and declined like the Sunne of the Firmament, hath left the vniuersall Orbe of the whole earth in palpable darknesse. Yet to vs liuing in this world, the beames of his brightnesse, the light of his spirit, the power of his person, and the glory of his goodnesse, is most evidently manifested by the Scriptures and preaching of his holy word: so that there wee behold infinite thousands walking in darkenesse, and standing on the left hand of God, ready for damnation: but here wee see a few persons, professors of Religion, like the men of *Cassius*, liuing in the sight and presence of our Sauiour, (whom they behold shining in the Scriptures) and standing on the right hand waiting for saluation. For this cause the voice of the eternall God soundeth so often vnto vs in the Scriptures, that wee were vnder the Prince of darkenesse, that wee were darkened in our cogitations, that it was night,

night, but now the day-starre from on high hath visited vs, and therefore we must cast away the deedes of darkenesse, and put on the armour of light, and the Scriptures euery where testifie, that the Church of God is in the toppe of the mountaines, meaning that the dignity of our calling, as farre excelleth the fancies of the world, as the hils arise aboue the vallies of the earth. This is the infalible word of life, and all the writings of men are but the Apes hereof: from hence they heard of their golden ages, their fearefull wonders, their strange inuentions, and their incredible fictions, which they haue broched concerning heauen and earth. When *Ptolomæus Philadelphus*, King of Egypt, builded his famous library, and had furnished it with all the writings of the heathen, he also by Ambassadors to the high Priest in Iudah, obtained the old Testament, and sixe men of euery Tribe, to translate it out of Hebrew into Greeke: then *Demetrius Phalerius*, one of the Scholiers of *Theophrastus*, certified the King, that among all the writings of their learned Philosophers, they onely were diuine, and the Cælestiall Oracles of the euerlasting God. For their truth, the

secret nature of euery heart is forced to confesse for their substance, it is altogether occupied on heauenly things, for their sincerity, it is established in the promise of him, who neuer changeth, for their stile, neither their Principles of *Plato*, the demonstrations of *Aristotle*, the inuentions of *Hippocrates*, the sleights of *Carneades*, the exclamations of *Cicero*, or the conceits of *Seneca*, were vttered in so plaine eloquence or commendable phrales, as the Scriptures of our saluation. Also if your *Hon.* consider the often changes of the lawes of godlesse Gentiles, you shall perceiue that they haue had as many Religions as Generations: but you shall finde that wee haue now the Religion of *Adam*, the faith of *Enoch*, the Arke of *Noah*, the sacrifice of *Abraham*, and all the true worship of God, as the Church possessed it many thousand yeeres agoe: and all because the rule hereof, the heauenly word of God remaineth for euer. *Lycurgus* the best law-maker that euer was among the Gentils, when he saw his lawes to be amended of the *Spartans*, for very grieve thereof, famished himselfe at *Crissa*. The lawes which *Papius* and *Iulius* gaue to the Romanes, were disanulled by

*Seuerus*

*Senecus* the Emperour: all the world erreth, some one way, and some another, mutually condemning each others superstition, onely the Church of God in euery age retained one God, one faith, one Baptisme, and one substance of Religion, because it followeth one voice of the holy Ghost, speaking in the Scriptures. It were infinite to set down all the commodity we receiue by this heavenly writing. By it our manners are mollified, our mindes instructed, our liues blessed, and we deliuered from Atheisme, Paganisme, and Papisme, Atheisme denieth all things, Paganisme corrupteth all things, and Papisme confoundeth all things, therefore by the word of God, wee are freed from doubting the truth, deceiuing our own soules, and confounding Religion. And because this requireth some prooffe, I beseech your Ho. to beare with my tediousnesse, while I manifest my mind so briefly as I may, omitting Atheisme fitter for dogges to beleue, then men to professe, I will briefly declare, how the Gentiles (such as we were before the word wrought our calling) haue falsified the whole Scripture, and corrupted the tradition thereof with the inuentions



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of their owne Poets ? and how the Papists are but confounders of Heathenisme, heresie and Christianity.

First to begin with the Gentiles, while reason and nature enforced them to confesse a God, (which is onely and truly learned in the Scriptures,) they imagined a multitude of gods and goddesses; in the scriptures we finde the mention hereof, that every nation had a peculiar God. The Zidonians and Syrians had *Asaroth*, or as some call him *Astartes*, the Moabites had *Chemosh*; the Ammonites had *Milcom* or *Moloch*; the Babilonians *Bel*, the Philistines *Dagon*, the Egyptians worshipped many beasts, but especially a sheepe: among other writers, wee finde that the Athenians had *Apollo* and *Minerva*, the Boetian Thebes, *Bacchus* and *Hercules*; Carthage, had *Inno*; Cyprus and Paphus, *Venus*, Rhodes, *Apollo*, *Tænatus*, *Neptune*, the Greekes and Ephesians, *Diana*, the Romaines *Mars* the Italians, *Janus*, the Arabians *Diafares*, The Germanes *Tibilenus*, the men of Affrique *Cælestus*, and the Moores haue worshipped the gouernors of their Country. Thus they turned the glory of the incorruptible God into the similitude of

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of corruptible creatures, as birds, beastes, fishes and serpents, and wandred without God, while they framed to themselves a multitude of Gods, and the best they could inuent, were sinnefull and abhominable wretches, such as exceeded all others in notorious crimes, as I could easily shew, if it were to my purpose, and moreouer they haue forsaken not onely the true God, but haue blotted the names of their most famous men, leauing the worthiest in hell, and lifting the worst into heaven. For might not they as well haue made *Sosrates* a God for his wisdom, whom *Apollo* himself honoured with his Oracle. *Pantoon*, *Androon*, *Socrates*, *Sophotatos*, of all men *Socrates* was the wisest: *Aristides* excelled them all in iustice, *Themistocles* for warre, *Alexander* in honour, *Polycrates* in felicity, and *Demosthenes* in eloquence: Who was more graue then *Cato*, more valiant then *Scipio*, more affable then *Camillus*, more excellent then *Iul. Caesar*, more happy then *Sylla*, more wea'thy then *Crassus*, or more religious then *Numa Pompilius*? truly none amongall their diuels, I would say goddes, with whom all the nations of the earth haue committed fornication. In lat-

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ter times the Romaines had onely power to consecrate goddes, as now the Pope & his Cardinals doe challenge the same to canonize Saints. But would not the hearts of the godly breake in sunder to consider that euery City inuented a new God, yea euery family had their houshold goddes, committed idolatrie with birdes of the aire, and beasts of the earth, men and women, Moone and Starres, Sunne and Angels, euen to the Asses head, as commonly as the Serpent liueth on the dust, or as greedily as the Lion raueneth when hee findeth a prey. The study of Astronomie verifieth this, for they haue imagined signes from the Eagle to the little birde, from the Lion to the little dogge, from the Whale to the little fish, and from reasonable creatures to vnreasonable monsters: because they would haue some colour for their impietie, they translated their Idols to be signes in heauen. But now when the light of the word of life once shined in the world, they perceiued their owne follies, renounced their old errors, and receiued the wholesome doctrine of the onely true and eternall God: for as the Lions runne at the sight of a firebrand, as the Cockatrice

flieth

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flieeth when she fauoureth the Weasill, and  
 the cloudes flie away when the Northerne  
 wind bloweth, so these subtileries of Sa-  
 than being once discovered, through the  
 simplicitie of the Scriptures, they fall again  
 into the breast of the first Author, and I  
 would to God they were for euer buried in  
 his bottomlesse kingdom. Also that which  
 we finde in the word of God concerning  
 the creation, the floud, the replenishing of  
 the earth, the beginning or confusion of  
 tongues; destruction of *Sodom* and *Go-  
 morpha*, the deliuerie of the Israelites from  
*Egypt*, the miracles of *Moses* and *Aaron*, the  
 ouerthrow of the Cananites whom they  
 call *Phœnicians*, the building of *Salomons*  
 Temple, the scattering of the Tribes of *Is-  
 rael*, the birch of Christ, the darkenesse at  
 his death, and the preaching of the Apo-  
 stles: they haue corrupted with fond Ad-  
 ditions, wilfull deuises, intollerable blas-  
 phemies, ignorant relations, wicked sub-  
 stractions, and accursed deprauations,  
 which if I should follow, I might make a  
 large volume: onely thus much I will be  
 bold to say, that all the wisdom of the  
 Gentiles was nothing but the doctrine of  
 diuels, and that all the world before the  
 comming

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comming of Christ, was without the true knowledge of God, the Iewes onely excepted. The learned haue noted these 4. as the generall heades of ancient captiuitie; the first is *Barbarisme*, wherein men liued vnder no guide, preserued no peace, followed no commendable kind of life, but euery one did that which pleased him, to the disgrace of mankind, refusing onely that which was good, and altogether embracing that which was accursed, then one satisfied another with bloody reuēge, making no more account of the life of a man, then the blood of a beast, then they mingeld themselues like brutish creatures in generation, brother with sister, father with daughter, and mother with her son, then their strength was their law, their desire was their counsellour, their affections pleaded, their will gaue iudgement, and their malice was the meanes to execute their cruelty. The second head or fountaine of falshood among the Gentiles is called *Scythisme*, because it was first practised among the Scythians, a barbarous and cruel people, differing in nothing from the former, saue onely because they had one gouernour or ruler, to whom they were subiect,

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subiect, being at his commandement, to execute right or wrong, to saue or kil, keeping peace with none, but many times setting their children to drinke the bloud of their owne parents, and the parents to eate the flesh of their owne children. The third kind of falshood which raigneth among the Gentiles, for want of the word of God, is called *Hellenisme*, which consisteth in the worship of Idols; this began among the Grecians, who are called in their owne tongue *Hellenes*, and therefore was the superstitiō called Hellenisme; this detestable canker so preuailed, that not only the Grecians, Babilonians, Egyptiās, Syrians, Phenitians, Phrygians, & many other nations were infected therewith; but the Israelites, the people of God were poysoned therewith, which in the end was their vtter subuersion, and this hath rained a long time in the Church of *Rome*, & in all thole kingdomes where she could plant her chaire, which all the godly doe perceiue will bee her euerlasting destruction. But this Hellenisme preuailed mightily, for the space of two thousand yeeres; vnder which time sprang all the sects of the Philosophers, as the Pythagoreans, which taught that men might



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might not sacrifice to the Gods that the soules of men departed, doe goe into other men, and also into bruit beasts, that whatsoeuer was about the Moone, was immortall, with such like fantasies, and in the end this *Pythagoras* would be called a God. Next vnto him arose the Platonists, who affirmed that the world was created of the Angels, and little gods, that of one God there came many other Gods, that all women ought to bee common, and that no man ought to haue a wife peculiar to himselfe in a well ordered common wealth. After these succeeded the *Stoickes*, who affirmed this world to be God, that all flesh shal perish, & that the soules depart from one into another. Then also began the Epicures to grow like serpents, borne onely to destroy others, they would haue all things to end in pleasure, that there is no God or providence, that none are blessed but in this present life. And thus your Honor may perceiue how miserable were those dayes, when men ranne headlong into so great extremities, that their profession of wisdome was the confession of folly, and for all their light of learning, they groped in a Cimmerian darknesse, being shadow-  
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ed with ignorance like the Country *Odeffa* in Greece, which by reason of mighty hills thereto adioyning, neuer felt the beames of the sunne. The fourth head or fountain of vngodlinesse, is called *Samaritanisme*, of the Samaritans which mingled themselues with the profession of the Iewes, and receiued some part of the Bible, yet like the Anabaptists in our dayes, without any difference or conscience kept company with Iewes and Gentiles. Of these came many accursed sects, from whom sprang many detestable opinions; and thus the world laboured with damnable deuises, while the Diuel laughed at their dayly destruction, whereby this is euident, that Philosophie or Paganisme is the corruption of our Religion. But some peradventure will obiekt vnto me, that they had very excellent and worthy men, who crowned their Country and kindred with endlesse memory. *Mutius* left his right hand on the Altar. *Empedocles* willingly cast himselfe into the burning flames of the mountaine *Etna*. One of the builders of Carthage, to auoide a second marriage, cast her selfe into the burning graue. *Regulus* beeing freed from the Carthagenians, choosed rather to suffer death himselfe

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himselfe in most cruell torments, then to discharge their prisoners at *Rome*. *Menocæus* seeing his City of the *Thebes* besieged by the Grecians, which they threatned to destroy, except one of them would giue himselfe for all, did ascend to the wall of the City, and there piercing his body with a sword, fell downe dead among his enemies, wherewith they contented, departed. *Alceſtis* the wife of *Perilaus* seeing (as shee supposed) the fiends come for her husband, who lay sick, slew herselfe, bidding them to take her shadow, and spare her husbands life.

To speake nothing of *Lucretia*, *Dyrachia*, *Aria*, *Cyane*, and many others, only let this suffice; *Eleates* being asked of *Dionisius* the Tyrant, what was better then Philosophie, answered death: whereupon hee was commanded to bee scourged to death, which for the defence of his speech, and contempt of death hee most patiently endured. Yet *Textullian*, a Christian father, speaking of such like actions, hath these words; O lawfull commendation because humane, to whom neither wilfull presumption, nor desperate perswasion is imputed, to whom it is permitted

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ted to die in contempt of death, & all manner of cruelty: to whom is giuen more liberty to suffer for his Country, kingdome, or friends, then for God. Who is hee that cannot with one eyespie the meaning of this father? Improving this kind of death, as presumption or desperation which may neuer haue any harbour in the hearts of the faithfull: what shall wee then say of all these worthy persons? Surely, whatsoeuer is not of faith, is sinne, and without faith it is impossible to please God. We must not regard what man doth, but what God cōmandeth, as the Emperour *Constantine* once said, It is not death, but the cause of death that deserveth commendation, as *Agessilaus* the best Grecian Prince that euer was, was wont to say. The purest Adamant is not worne with yron, nor wasted with fire, yet a little Goates bloud will cōsume it: euen so, if one man could suffer all the trials in the world, and abide many thousand deathes by fire and torture; yet it shall no whit profite him, except the bloud of Iesus Christ loose the fetters of sinne, and breake the chaines of the Diuel: now the mercies of God in Christ are not cōmunicated to any, but to such as know

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them,

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them, and who can know them without  
 the word of God? This is the fountaine of  
 water of life, and all other are but poyso-  
 ned puddles, stinking more filthily in the  
 presence of God then the Lake of *Camari-  
 na* in the nostrils of men. They report that  
 in *Sicilia* there are two springs, wherof one  
 will make a fruitfull woman barren, the o-  
 ther a barren woman fruitfull: if this were  
 so, I thinke all the world would haue re-  
 course vnto it. Yet in this word of God,  
 there is a greater commodity declared vn-  
 to vs, for here we learne the true cause of  
 barrennesse, which beeing knowne, the  
 disease is the more easily remoued: here we  
 learne the meanes whereby it is cured, as  
 in *Rebecca*, *Anna*, *Elizabeth*, and others,  
 which might as easily be practised, as true  
 Religion vnfainedly professed. Moreouer,  
 they tell vs, that in *Epirus* at the foot of the  
 hill *Tomarus*, there is a holy Well, which  
 of it selfe will kindle a Torch, being put  
 vnto it, and quench it being brought bur-  
 ning thereto; grant this to bee true, and it  
 will represent vnto vs the nature of his ho-  
 ly Well, the word of God, which with the  
 water of our Baptisme doth fire our harts  
 by the holy Ghost, but comming vnto it,  
bur-

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burning in the heate of our owne lust, quencheth the flame of our owne concupiscence. Also wee finde in *Varro*, that there are two streames in *Beotia*, whereof if sheepe drinke, the one burneth their colour in Russet, and the other maketh them white againe, if this be possible as al things are possible to the Creator of the world; what maruaile though wee are regenerated, (not new coloured) by the immortall seed of his heauenly word. Which are his sheepe, and the corruptions of our nature so washed in the same, that our garments of righteousness are as white as snow in his presence. *Solinus* telleth that at the City *Debris* among the *Gatamantes*, there is a spring which at the rising of the sun congealeth the Ice, but at the setting thereof, resolueth to water againe, which is contrary to al the world beside, freezing with heat and thawing with cold: yet wee may make this vse thereof, that it is no wonder to see our heauenly Well to worke these contraries, to be the fauour of life vnto life, or else the fauour of death vnto death, that vnto some it is a two edged sword to giue them mortall wounds, vnto other, a broad target to defend them from danger, that it



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wrought so effectually in the dayes of persecution, when it was oppressed in darknesse, but now freezeth and hardneth in the dayes of peace, when the sunne of prosperity shineth to all. Surely as the Albeste stone once set on fire, can neuer bee quenched, so if wee could but once burn in loue vnfainedly with the Gospel, our profession should not be so luke-warme, nor our deuotion so small in the cause of Religion: And thus I haue been bold with your Ho. to proue my first assertion, wherein if I haue beene too long, let me craue pardon, and I wil promise greater breuity in my second proposition, which is this, that Popery is a confusion of Heathenisme, Heresie, and Christianity.

And that I may methodically proceed, I will beginne at their highest degree, and so in order lightly touch so many things as may certifie your Ho. of the truth of their Religion. *Numa* appointed one to bee a high Priest, at whose iudgement all temporall and spirituall things were administered: the same is retained in the Church of *Rome*, for the Pope obtained of *Phocas* the Emperour, and murderer of *Mauritius*, that the Bishoppe of *Rome* might bee the head

head of all Churches, to whose iudgement all the world in spirituall matters must be subiect, by which in time it came to this, that hee corrupted the whole Church of Christ, that he got both swords into his hand, and made himselfe a triple Crowne, after the manner of the late Romane Emperours, who had three Crownes at their inauguration. And as the triple lightning was the Ensigne of *Iupiter*: so the triple crowne is the badge of the Pope, through the honour or terror thereof, hee threatneth what thunderbolts he pleaseth in the world. The Cabalists imagined two Keyes, whereby Paradise was opened and shut; from hence the Pope hath in his banner the Crosse Keyes, telling vs that hee hath power, to open and shut paradise, for, and against whom he pleaseth: being thus exalted into the highest place, as it was reported, the God *Terminus* would not giue place to *Iupiter* standing both in the Capitoll, no more the Pope giueth place to Christ, although hee stand in the midst of his Church, and sit at the right hand of his Father in heauen. For this cause, as the Emperours had their Senate, so hee hath his Cardinals: as the Egyptians bound

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the Priests of *Isis* or *Apis*, to liue in perpetuall virginity, so hee forceth the sacred shauelings of his vnholly seate, with the vow of perpetuall chastity, and that hee might helpe their weakenesse in this behalte, as *Caligula* suffered the Whores of *Rome* in his dayes, so the Popes haue graunted the toleration of a Stewes, builded by a Pope, *Sixtus* the fourth, which in short time so preuailed, that the Pope receiued for Rents thereof forty thousand Duccats by the yeere. And *Paul* the third, had the names of forty and fīue thousand Tenants belonging to that most filthy and damnable kind of life. Furthermore he furnished, or rather poisoned the Church of Christ, with Friers, Monkes, Nunnes. The Friers and Monkes are the successors of the *Essæan*, *Dosithean*, *Nasachean*, and *Cynicall* heretikes, which like these take vpon them the vowes of wilfull pouertie, and perpetuall chastity, placing their Religion in abstinence from meates, in outward and hypocriticall fasting, affirming that they are the successors and followers of the Apostles, like the heretikes called by *Augustine* Apostoliques, defending that the Apostles lead a single life, and had no wiues; so these  
Romish

Romish heretikes account marriage but filthinesse, like the Marcionites, Tacians, Adamites, Platonists, and Valeſian heretiques, and are not aſhamed to make the holy Apoſtles of Chriſt breakers of wedlocke, and wilful departers from their own wiues, contrary to the writings of the Euangelists and Saint *Paul*. The Nunnes or women Monkes are the natural ſucceſſors of the veſtall Virgins, inſtituted by *Numa*, and as theſe were dedicated to *Veſta*, *Apollo*, *Iuno*, *Argina*, *Diana*, and *Minerua*, ſo are the Romiſh Nunnes to *Marie* the mother of Chriſt, and other holy women. Then alſo did hee beginne to dreſſe and adorne the Temples with Images which hee learned of the Gentiles, as I haue already declared, and herein hee ioyned with the Gnoſtikes and Baſilidian heretiques, who defended images to be lawfull for Chriſtian people; and as the Gentiles had their ſacrifices for the dead, called *Inferie*, ſo hee inſtituted praiers for the dead, leſt hee ſhould ſeeme to want any thing, which he ſhould not haue. Then alſo hee tooke the ſcriptures from the common people, leſt they ſhould eſpie his lewdneſſe, and as *Lyſis* the Pithagorean blamed one of his fellowes for ma-

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king knowne abroad their Masters precepts, so he blameth all those that shall open the mysteries of the Gospell to the common people: and as the Magicians of *Persia* were wont to sing to their Idols in a strange tongue, so the Pope commanded all things to be done in the Church in an vnknowne language, wherein they also ioyne with the Basilidian heretikes, who gaue this as a Principle, that their mysteries must be concealed, & reuealed only to a few, being worse then the Pythagorians, who commanded but fīue yeers silence to their Disciples, but the Papists keepe men all their liues from reading, speaking and conferring on the Scripture. By this means he deceiued the world with iugling, like the heretiques called *Mirabiliarij*, and affirmeth that faith commeth by nature, like the Basilidians and Gnosticks, they taught that euery one that would bee saued, must be annoyed in their sicknesse, like the Heracleonite heretiques, that it is lawfull for women to baptize like the Marcionites, that children vn baptized are not vnder the couenant, and that grace is given with the outward signe, like the Arrians and Heracleonites, that children must bee anointed

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nointed with oyle in Baptisme, like the heretikes *Marcus* and *Marcosus*, that Baptisme washeth away originall sinnes, and such actuall as are committed before, like the Nouatians, and Messalian heretiques, that the Sacrament of the Supper of the Lord, after the words of Consecration spoken, is the very body and bloud of Christ, so the heretikes called *Marcites*, saide, they made by coniuration, and for this cause the Pepuzian heretiques baked the bloud of man with the bread ordained for this supper; that wine must be mingled with water, as the *Artotyrits* said, they must offer Cheele with the bread in the Sacrament; that good workes merite eternall life, like the Pelagians, Catharites, & Mahumetists: that a man since the fall of *Adam* hath free will, and that God hath Predestinated none, like the Pelagiāns, that it is lawfull for vs to sweare by creatures, as the virgine *Marie*, Saints and Angels, so doe the Manichæans and Mahumetists; that some sinnes bee mortall and some veniall, so doth *Mahomet* affirme: with a thousand like, most vaine, wicked, wretched, blasphemous and damnable assertions, which were most easie to bee proued if  
there



## THE EPISTLE

there were any question of it. By this your Ho. may perceiue, that their Religion is but patched of many condemned heresies, defended by vnwritten traditions, and maintained by violent and forcible dealing: like the *Chameleon* they haue often changed and poysoned the world, but the Scriptures are as a baye-leave, to cure the contagion of such mortall confusion. And thus in some sort I haue performed my promise, in deliuering the vanity of the world, which hath refused the wisdome of the eternall word of God. The end of this my speech, is to shew the wonderfull and incomparable treasure of the holy Scriptures; for as the gold hath the brightest beames, being laid to the Copper: as the Adamant is of greatest force, when the Load-stone is beside it, and the purest colour hath the best hiew, when the counterfeite is compared with it, so the blessing of God in his word doth most magnificently appeare, when we behold before our eyes the counterfaite colours of superstitious conceits, the crooked deuises and cursed opinions of the condemned crue, which haue refused the way of life declared herein, and chosen the path of damnation  
for

## DEDICATORIE.

for the hire of their superstition. The scriptures are not onely a Castle to keepe vs from heresie, but also a salue or remedy, if we haue beene poisoned by falshood. The sting of the Scorpion is cured by applying the Achates stone, the grasse Alimos preserueth the famished person from death, the Beare hauing eaten Mandragora saueth his life by the little Emmet, and the poison of the Chamelion is expelled by a Bay-lease: euen so the word of God cureth the heresies of Poperie, which are compared to the stinging of the Scorpions in the Scriptures, it is the fruite of the tree of life, and whosoeuer eateth & digesteth it, shall neuer die, it is a preservative against all poyson, and the leaues thereof shall cure the nations. By this alone the Lord hath wrought the calling of his children, the confusion of his enemies, the comfort of his Saints, and the replenishing of his Kingdome. All the Kings of the earth haue beene in Armes against it: yet the ministers thereof, who neuer bore Armes against them, by their onely preaching haue wonne a glorious field. All *Egypt* could not resist *Moses* and *Aaron*, because they came on the Lords message: no  
more

more shall all the world ouercome the preachers of peace, so long as they faithfully performe their heauenly Ambassage. Words haue wrought more then weapons; the Spirit hath pierced more then the Speare; the walles of Paper, and the ordinance of fethers, haue battered downe the stately kingdome of the Whore of *Babylon*; Learning hath done better seruice then Launces, Gownes haue conquered more then Gunnes; Bookes haue done more good then Bullets, and the prayers of the faithfull haue preuailed more then the Pikes of horsemen; the stone which the builders refused, is become the head of the corner, this is the Lords doing, and it is maruailous in our eyes, the bloud of the dead Martyrs hath giuen greater wounds in this quarrell, then the swords of the liuing souldiers. But thus I haue too long troubled your Hon. with that which you knew before, and haue presumed on your fauour for the acceptation of these my slender labours vpon one part of Scripture, the Booke of *Ruth*, which as the holy Ghost hath vouchsafed to call by the name of a woman, to the prayse of the whole sexe, and euerlasting commendation of her

Reli-

## DEDICATORIE.

Religion: so am I emboldened to Dedicate it to so Honourable a Lady as your selfe, whom I know to be a *Ruth* by Religion, though a Noble woman by birth. For many witnesses can testifie this also if I should be silent, and the ordinary exercises at *Seuenoke*, will sound your name, because your presence and diligence at them hath stirred vp many meaner persons comforted some godly people thereabout, and much euery way countenanced, & encouraged the preachers of the same. There are many causes which might compell mee, (though vnwilling) to commit my labors to the Presse, yet willingly to present them to the world vnder the name of your Honour. For I am assured of the acceptation of any small thing that shall be offered in the name of Religion, much more of this which comprehendeth the recompence and reward of our profession. Your Hon. knoweth that better it is to see the smoake of ones owne Country, then the fire of an other: so I trust my slender studies, which are but as smoak, being compared with the burning coales of others knowledge, such as dayly you heare, shall be the better accepted, because there I had my being,

where

THE EPISTLE, &c.

where your Hon.hath your dwelling.Also I am hereunto moued, that I might haue any occasion, to testifie my bounden duty which I owe vnto that Noble and worthy Gentleman, Sir *Henry Lennard* your sonne, of whom I haue receiued especiall encouragements in the course of my studies, & to whom I must remaine a debtor to the end of my dayes, being no wayes able to recompence his wonted kindnesse, but only by this, dayly to pray for his life and prosperity, that he may be as the heyre of your Honour, so an ornament of the Noble house of the *Dacres*. And the God of all peace blesse your owne person, with such blessings as you dayly desire, that you may still liue to the comfort of the godly in this present life, to the enlarging of your owne Honour, to the reioysing of your whole family, and to the endlesse saluatiō of your owne soule, with Iesus Christ the Saviour of all them which haue vnfainedly embraced true Religion.

*Your Honours to command in the Lord,*

EDWARD TOPSELL.



To all them that vnfaigned-  
ly embrace true Re-  
ligion.

**D**Earely beloued in Christ, when  
I consider that comfortable O-  
racle of the Apostle, when hee  
saith, that godlinesse hath the  
promises of this life, and of the  
life to come; it commeth into  
my mind that Religion is none of the meane-  
st professions that is laboured for in the world: for  
the greatest rewards are promised to the chief-  
est exploiters, and the worthiest enterprizes are  
crowned with glorious benefites. Ioseph for  
his wisdom was made the Gouvernour of E-  
gypt. Othoniel for his seruice receiued Achah  
the daughter of Caleb for his wife. Iephthah  
for his victory was made Iudge of Israel, and  
Dauid for his Musike was made one of the  
Courtiers of Saul. In so much as it seemeth an  
ordinary



## TO THE READER.

ordinary practise, that euery knowledge is rewarded with some curtisie: whereby wee are certified, that it is no mtruell to heare and hope for so excellent blessings as are promised to the Religious. For they are the house of the Lord, and as hee dwelleth with all maiesty in heauen: so hee raigneth with all authority in the righteous, they are a chosen generation borne of God, a royall and holy priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, the freemen of Christ, the inheritors of the earth, the Iudges of the world, the coheires of Christs kingdom, and the Citizens of heauen. If wee looke for their Nobility, they are the sonnes of God, if for their instruction, they are taught of God, if for their tuition, the heauenly Angels are their seruants, if for their degrees, they are Kings and Priests for the eternall God, if for their calling, they are Saints, if for their life, it is heauenly, if for their wealth it is the whole world: and finally, their death is the birth-day of all felicity. For this cause David desired rather to bee a dorekeeper in the house of God, then a dweller in the stately tents of the wicked: as if the meanest condition among the professors of Religion, were more excellent then the chiefest estates among the worldlings, their crosses excell the others crowns, their barren-  
nesse

TO THE READER.

nesse, the others fruitfulnessse, their humility, the others honor, their ignorance, the others knowledge, their simplicitie, the others wisdom, their weaknesse, the others strength, and a little thing that the righteous hath, is better then the great possession of the vngodly. When there is famine, they are satisfied, when there is warre, they are deliuered, when there is plague, they are without danger, if fire fall from heauen, it shall not burne them, if the waters arise about the mountaines, they are not drowned, if the earth quake and rend asunder, yet they are not swallowed up, if the wilde beasts fall vpon them, they are not deuoured, and if the diuell himself would oppresse them, yet he shall not overcome them. Then how glorious is our calling, that liue vnder the wings of God, that feede with the flocke of Christ, to whom are reuealed the secret counsels of the Lord, speaking vnto vs by his Ministers, giuing vs the euidence of our saluation by his Testament, regenerating vs by the immortall seed of his holy word, sealing vs with the spirit of promise, lifting vs up from the dust of worldly misery, to the thrones of heauenly Maiestie. Salomons seruants were happy that stood in his presence and heard his wisdom. Daniel was happie when the Lions could not

TO THE READER.

destroy him, his fellowes were happie when the fire could not consume them, the Israelites were happie, when the Egyptians were drowned, Iob was happie, when his wealth was restored, and the Disciples were blessed when they heard Christ preach. How many blessings belong to the religious? Satan that roaring Lion, cannot auercome them, the fire shall haue no power on them, their enemies shall neuer hurt them, the riches of the grace of God shall bee powred vpon them, and the word of life is daily preached vnto them. Consider therefore, my beloued, what is the hope of our profession, whereunto we are called; the dignitie of our condition wherein wee stand, and the reward of our Religion prepared for our soules. Call to minde the examples of the Fathers, the promises of the Gospell, the oath of the Lord himselte, the price of our redemption, and the place of our saluation: you shall find nothing wanting in Religion, that might encrease your blessednesse. Therefore, how happie are the eares that heare the things which we heare, the eyes that see the things which we see, the hands that handle the things which we touch, yea the soules that are assured of the fauour of God. If all the world would goe about to set downe the felicitie of the godly, and the dignitie

TO THE READER.

dignitie of the chosen, they could neuer atchieue it: no, not that which they enioy in this life, for their thoughts are heauenly, their hearts the throne of the holy Ghost, their hands feelee the Lord of glorie, their tongues talke of his praise, their feete stand in his Temple, their words are acceptable before him, their prayers like sweete saours of incense; their worship like euening sacrifices, their eies behold his glorie, their eares heare his wisdom, and their names are written in the kingdome of heauen. Would not any man become religious, that hee might be rewarded with this excellent honor? to eate his meate with the King of heauen, to weare the Crowne that neuer shall haue end, to haue the Angels his attenders, the Saints his fellowes, the heauens his dwelling place, the stars vnder his feet, the euerlasting light to walk in, the presence of God to delight him, and the pleasures of Paradise for the recompence of his religion. For this cause I haue giuen this title, vnto these my slender labours, vpon this Booke of Ruth: wherein (beloued in Christ) you shall finde the matter agree with the title, and the hope of all the faithfull concerning the end of their profession, so profitably decyphered, as hath comforted many troubled soules, confirmed many wauering minds, confounded

## TO THE READER.

many obstinate Atheists, encouraged many godly persons, and therefore I hope will offer the same fauour vnto you in reading, as it hath vnto many other in preaching. Hercin the holy Ghost (I meane in the booke of Ruth) hath laid open whatsoener can be expected of them that feare the Lord: heere are afflictions to humble vs, death to preuent vs, and examples to admonish vs: heere is the zeale of the godly, the vertue of an effectuall calling, the vizard of hypocrisie declared vnto vs: heere is the loue of the faithfull, the obedience to parents, and the beneuolence of godly persons commended vnto vs: heere is the care of our parents, the gifts of the spirit, and the holines of the religious committed to the Church: here is the office of Magistrates, the prayers of our brethren, and the calling of the Gentiles expressed, in the marriage of Ruth with Boaz, who was made a mother of many Kings, but especially of the King of glorie, the Sonne of God, the Saviour of the world, and the gatherer together of the heires of grace. My desire therefore is this, that you try it by perusing and reading this Treatise: for it is but superfluous labour for me any further to trouble you with the argument hereof, seeing the whole matter lieth before your considerations. I will pray for  
your

## TO THE READER.

your successe, and commend the end of my tra-  
uels, (which is the comfort and instruction of  
the members of Christ) to the fountaine of  
mercie, by whom the heauens water the earth,  
and the earth multiplieth with encrease, and  
the encrease thereof preserueth the world, that  
by the same power, your soules may be edified,  
your faith may bee strengthened, my labours  
may be blessed, that his name may bee glorified,  
his Word may euermore be taught among vs,  
that many generations may embrace his Gos-  
pell, and the course thereof finished, our Religi-  
on, by the mercie of the Father, in the Sonne,  
with the holy Ghost, may bee rewarded with e-  
ternall saluation. To whom let vs euermore  
gine thanks, because he hath vouchsafed vs the  
dignitie thereof; and walke worthy of our cal-  
ling, lest our secure liues, our idle faith, our  
vaine hope, our cold profession, and our com-  
mon conuersation with the vngodly, bring vp-  
on vs everlasting damnation.

Your louing brother, who desi-  
reth your prayers.

EDWARD TOPSELL.





**L**O heere what guerdon godlinesse doth get,  
And how the crosse doth come before the crowne :  
Lo widowes twaine before our eyes are set  
Not raised aloft, before they be cast downe.  
And thou O *Ruth* renouncing natiue towne,  
And *Baal-peor*, God of *Moab* land,  
Art set at rest, and blest by Gods owne hand.

The Loue of friends and country ouerpeized  
With loue of soueraigne Lord behold in sight :  
The antique age, and life of Patriarkes praised,  
How liberall, frugall, chaste, pure, and vpright.  
But now this mould of earth is turned quite,  
Alas that nought in perfect state should sit,  
The world is chang'd and we are chang'd in it.

Art thou a maid ? Learne heere of *Ruth* thy mate,  
To chuse whom God inspires with grace diuine,  
A widow thou to paines and labour late,  
In each degree thy selfe with *Ruth* resign,  
Or art a wife ? to righteous *Ruth* encline.  
If wife, or maid, or widow then thou bee,  
Thy selfe in *Ruth*, thou as in Glasse shalt see.

Go little Booke, display thy golden title,  
(And yet not little, though thou little bee:)  
Little for price, and yet in price not little,  
Thine was the Paine, the gaine is ours I see:  
(Although our gaine thou deem'st no paine to thee)\*  
If then, O Reader, little paine thou take,  
Thou greatest gaine with smallest paine shalt make.

The hungrie stomacke feeds with full desire,  
Whereby their vitall spirits soone renue:  
So if thine heart shall burne with heauenly fire,  
Hereby great fruit shall to thy faith accrew.  
Trie ere thou trust, and then giue sentence true,  
If reading once be pleasant to thy tast,  
Next pleaseth more, yet sweetest comes at last.

WILLIAM ATTERSOL.

1  
Gould be the same, but I am not  
(And yet not the same, for I am not  
I think, for I am not the same  
I think, for I am not the same  
I think, for I am not the same  
I think, for I am not the same  
I think, for I am not the same  
I think, for I am not the same

The things that I see, with all their  
Which they will not let me see  
No thing that I see, with all their  
Which they will not let me see  
No thing that I see, with all their  
Which they will not let me see  
No thing that I see, with all their  
Which they will not let me see

WILLIAM ATTWOOD

...the people of the Temple ...  
...the Temple ...

...the Temple ...  
...the Temple ...

...the Temple ...  
...the Temple ...

...the Temple ...  
...the Temple ...



# The Analyfis, or Resol

The booke of  
Ruth cōtaineth  
the linely view  
of the Reward  
of Religion, in  
the family of E-  
limelech, wher-  
in must be con-  
sidered their

Affliction, as

Famine, which bringeth

Intoller  
scrie  
Feares

Soiourning and wandring  
in strange countries, to

For  
the  
Tor  
en

Receiuing

Hospitalitie, as

Hon  
M

Plentie,

Among  
Among

Deliverance  
by

To their owne country  
where they are

Returning

With company gained  
to the Lord, for the

# Resolution of the Booke of Ruth.

Intollerable want and mi- } Utter decay and losse of world-  
 crieto the } ly prosperitie.  
 carefull and pining death. } Selling and forsaking their pa-  
 trimonies.

- Forsake the people of } Temple and place of sacrifice,  
 the Lord with the } Lords Ministers and Word.

Remaine with their } Many yeares together.  
 enemies, infidels, } To die and be buried among them.

Houses and lands, } For themselves.  
 Marriage. } For their families.

mongst strangers in their pilgrimage.

mongst their owne friends at home, the famine being ended.

Joyfully receined of } To the praise of God in his  
 their friends, } Word.  
 To their owne comforts in  
 the Lord.

Readily restored by } To their } 1. To be present  
 the Magistrates } liberty: } at the Temple.  
 To their lands, livings. } 2. To haue iustice.

Increase of the } Wholesome doctrine.  
 Church, by } Sanctified and holy conuer-  
 sations.

Reuiving of } To stirre up their } In their houses.  
 their owne } names } On their inheri-  
 tance.

that be dead, } To multiply their Fa- } Worldly honor.  
 thers family, for } The Reward of  
 their Religion.



The book of  
Ruth containeth  
the last story  
of the Kingdom  
of Religion  
the family of  
Israel

Insurance

in strange countries, to  
obtain money and merchandise

Testimonies

Receiving

Plaints

To their answers and  
what they say

How to pay  
the law

# THE REWARDE OF RELIGION.

*Ruth. Chap. 1. verse, 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.*

- 1 *I*N the time that the Iudges ruled, there was a famine in the land. and a certaine man of Bethleem Iudah went for to iourne in the Country of Moab, he and his wife, and his two sonnes.
- 2 *And the name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sonnes Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of the land of Iudah, and when they were come into the land of Moab, they continued there.*
- 3 *Then Elimelech the husband of Naomi died there, and she remained with her two sonnes.*
- 4 *Which tooke them wiues of the Moabites, the name of the one was Horpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten yeres.*
- 5 *And Mahlon and Chilion died also both twaine, so the woman was left destitute of her two sons, & of her husband.*
- 6 *Then she arose with her daughter in law, and returned from the Country of Moab: for shee had heard say in the Country of Moab, that the Lord had visited his people, and giuen them bread.*



Although the author of this booke of *Ruth* hath not expressed his name, yet there is no doubt, but it proceedeth from the spirit of God, as well as the bookes of the Iudges, Kings, & Chronicles, which haue not the names of their Authors described: but

if it may bee lawfull to iudge or giue any sentence thereof,

thereof, it was either *Samuell*, or some other godly Prophet vnder the raigne of *Saul*, which is proued by the geneologies in the last chapter, where *Dauid* is by name mentioned, testifying vnto vs, (that it was then written) when he was chosen from his brethren and annointed King ouer *Israel*: and yet before his raigne, or els there had beene added vnto it, the title of a King, for the aduancing of the name of *Ruth*, who was his Grandmother, vpon whom this historie following dependeth. For the summe and scope hereof, is to shew the pedigree, or ancestrie, the naturall progenitors of Christ from *Iudah* the fourth sonne of *Iacob*, vntil the time that he began to challenge the princely seate, the royall scepter, and the right of gouernment ouer the people of *Israel*, which was at that time, when *Dauid* was chosen from his fathers house, & annointed King by *Samuel*. Again, in this historie, there is deliuered vnto vs, the hope which the fathers had, concerning the calling of the Gentiles, for this marriage of *Ruth* into the kindred of Christ, who was a Gentile, & by nature gone of the people of God, did plainely foretell that the Gentiles should be called in Christ: for as he tooke part of his humane nature of them, so he shewed vs, that he would giue the same for them, that there might be no difference in his body, between Iewes & Gentiles, but that the power of his death, the graces of the spirit, and the knowledge of redemption, might redound to all. Now the occasion of this history is deliuered vnto vs in this first Chapter, which is, the soiourning of a certain Iew in the land of *Moab*, (by reason there was a famine in the land of *Iudah*,) with his family, and the returne of them that liued, which were onely *Naomi* his wife, and one other, *Ruth* the Moabiteffe the widow of his eldest sonne.

1 This wandring or soiourning is described with al the circumstances therof, in these first 6. verses lately read: & generally contain in them these two parts, the first, is their trauaile to the land of *Moab*: the second, those things that hapned vnto them, after they came thither.

The

The first part is expressed in these two first verses, first, by the occasion, which is declared by the time, and by the thing that moued them thereunto, in these words: *In the time that the Iudges ruled, there was a famine, &c.* Secondly, by the persons that trauelled, who are described by the place, from whence they were, namely of *Bethlehẽ* *Iudah*, these were both the parents, and the children which are named in the 1. verse. The second part of these words, is in the 4. other verses following, and it concerneth either the parents or the children: the parents, that one of them, euen *Eliamelech*, the father of the family died there shortly after their arriual: the children, first that they married, ver. 4. Secondly, that they likewise died, ver. 5. Then remained one *Naomi* with her two daughters in law, and the time of her abode in *Moad* is set downe to be ten yeares, ver. 4. Secondly, the occasion of her departure, because shee heard say, that God had visited his people, and giuen them bread, ver. 6. of these parts let vs speake in order, as the spirit shall giue vnderstanding, and the time permit.

3 In the dayes that the Iudges ruled. In these words the holy Ghost after his accustomed manner, for the more certainty of the history, beginneth at the time as *Moses* beginneth his book of *Genesis* from the first creation of the world, so the Prophets in the beginning of their bookes set downe vnder what king or kings they prophesied, so also in the new Testament wee may see how three of the Euangelists beginne their Gospels from the preaching of *Iohn Baptist*, and the raig of King *Herod*. The which order they vndoubtedly learned of the old Writers, the same spirit guiding them to one and the same truth, vseth but one and the same manner of speaking, for the almighty desiring to meet with the wrangling obiections of humane inuentions, so tempereth the text of euery Scripture, as if question were made who did such a thing? Hee nameth the persons: where was it done? He quoteth the place, and when was it done? He mentioneth the time. The cause here-

Gen. 1. 1.

Esa. 1. 1.

Iere. 1. 2.

Math. 3. 1.

Math. 1. 3. 4.

Luc. 1. 3.

of is, that he might stay the waues of our fickle minds vpon the pillar of truth, his euerlasting word. Wee are much giuen to enquire the times, although they be to come, as wee may see in the Apostles, *Mar. 13.4.* who enquired of our Sauour when should the Temple bee destroyed: for time which is the true measure of things enflameth mens mindes with the knowledge thereof. And for this reason to saue our longing, hath the scriptures chronologized the world, so, as to a day, the experienced Diuine cā collect the ages frō the first day of the worlds creation, to the last Act of Acts of the Apostles. But in this place hee chiefly mentioneth the time of the Iudges, to shew vnto vs that when religion was corrupted, the worship of God decayed, and idolatry aduanced: when the Lord was forgotten of his own people, when his lawes were no more obserued, but euery man did that which seemed good in his own eyes, yea, when there were almost as many Gods among them as they were men, then euen then did the Lord send this plague of famine among them. For *Salomon* saith, the blowes of the wound serueth to purge the euill, and the stripes within the bottom of the bellie, as if he had said, as the ripenes of a wound calleth for a corasue, so the fulnesse of sinne crieth for vengeance.

4 By this therefore wee note, that the corruption of religion, and the neglect of the worship of God, is the cause of all his iudgements that are exercised in the world. For the Idolatry of *Ieroboam* and his sins wherby he induced *Israel* to sin, did the Lord threaten by *Achia* the Prophet, to scatter the people: so we may reade of *Bahasha* king of *Israel*, and so *Salomon* prayed at the dedication of the temple: when heauen shall be shut and thou giue no raine because they haue sinned against thee, &c. where he comprehendeth the chiefe and capital worldly punishments of sin, as dearth and famine, sword and pestilence, blindness and ignorance, which are also the rewards of sinne, and the vnseparable companions of all vnrighteousnesse: and what saith the Lord

*Iud. 2. 11. 12*

*13. & 21.*

*25.*

*Pro. 20. 30.*

*1 King. 14.*

*16. & 16. 2*

*13. 4.*

*1. King. 8.*

*35. 37.*

Lord by the Prophet? *Cast from you all your finnes where-  
withall you haue transgressed, and make you a new heart, for  
why should you die, oh you house of Israel?* as if he had said,  
eyther repent or else be damned, for it is a fearefull  
thing to fall into the hands of the liuing God. So wee  
read that the wantonnesse of the Church of God ha-  
uuing procured hæresies, and hæresies apostasie; Al-  
mighty God hath recalled men backe againe by sword  
and famine: when about the yeere of Christ 400. the  
Churches of *Affricke* had flourished, there came a cru-  
ell king among them called *Hunnerichus*, who abroga-  
ted and corrupted the true beliefe of Christians: and  
after many slaughters by him made, wherein the grea-  
test part of men after their vsuall manner had applau-  
ded and serued the kings cruell mind, and receiued his  
false and hæreticall faith, The Lord tooke the matter  
in hand, and first of all sending such droughts on the  
earth, that the Well-springs and fountaines were dried  
vp, and the earth thereby became barren, and void of  
all green things, vntill all the granaries for men, and  
the store in Barnes for cattell were consumed & spent,  
to preferue the life both of man and beast. And then,  
there conning no release, nor remedie, followed such  
a famine, that men were forced to strue with wild  
beasts for meate, and with wilde Boares for the rootes  
which were in the earth, that they might eate them.  
Many of the nobler Vandals, who were most exorbi-  
tant from the faith, wished and desired that some would  
buy them, and make bondmen of them to any slauerie,  
so they could but giue them food, and yet none could  
doe it. Lastly followed a pestilence, wherein the cruell  
Arrian king for his owne and his courtiers safeguard,  
caused an innumerable number of people to be thrust  
out of *Carthage* their owne City, and their owne houses,  
to the end that death might tarry with the lesse vio-  
lence. But all notwithstanding, he himselfe was stru-  
ken and perished by rottenneffe and wormes: for *mors  
regum aulæ, & pauperum tabernaculo æquo pede pulsat*, death  
seisseth both vpon the Courts of Kings and the cottages

Ezek. 18. 31



of beggers all alike, especially when God sendeth it to punish men for forsaking his worship.

5 And may not we thinke that all these thunderings out of God his iudgements among vs, will stir vp some raine of punishmens vpon vs? Are we not already put into the winepresse to bee brused vnder the hand of fearefull destruction? How many plagues haue come vpon vs within these few yeares? where is become the remembrance of the late enemies pretended inuasion? The rumor whereof amased the hearts of the courageous champions which spend all their dayes in pleasure: Oh then they cried, if they might be deliuered, they would alot some time of their dayes to the seruice of the Lord. Where is the remembrance of the late plague which was scattered almost in euery place of the land? Oh then wee cried vnto the Lord in our distresse, and hee deliuered vs out of all our miseries. Oh that men would therefore confesse the Lord, and declare the wonders hee doth for the children of men. But what are wee now amended? is the vngodly person turned from his vngodlinesse, and not rather strengthened in his iniquity? They which were ignorant are ignorant still, and many like *Demas*, who seemed religious, haue embraced this present world. As for the prophane both of poore and rich, they haue made a league with death, & a couenāt with the graue, though a sword come through the land, yet (say they) it shall not come at them. And therefore who can without watery eyes and bleeding heart, tell this present plague of dearth and famine, which we now most iustly endure, and yet who knoweth how long it shall continue. Now (as the Prophet sayeth) we are gathered together, and howle vpon our beds for corne and for new wine, that is, for the belly, and for the throat, but there is a greater leannes in the soule. Now we bite the stone which the Lord hath cast at vs, but we looke not at the hand which did send it, and who thinketh it to bee a punishment of sinne that now raigneth among vs? The papists say it is for our heresies, the popish Atheists say that

*Hos. 7. 14.*

13

that the world was best when the olde Religion was, for then al things were cheap, like the idolatrous Iewes which said vnto *Jeremy*, that it was well with them when they burnt incense, & made cakes to the host of heauē. The *Ruffians* say to the Preachers, as *Achab* said to *Elijah*, Are not you the troublers of *Israel*? when it is themselves and their fathers houses, while they haue left the commandement of God, and followed their pleasures, yea almost the whole country is so vainely addicted, that among these multitudes of Preachers that are abroad, there is not one that faithfully followeth his vocation, but they are molested by the basest, and condemned by the best. So that we may say, as our Sauour sayeth, we haue piped vnto you, and you haue not danced, we haue mourned, and you haue not sorrowed, yet wisdom is iustified of her children, who are not ashamed to pleade her cause in the gates of the Cities, before the face of her enemies: the Lord increase the number of them.

6 Wee haue long retained the name of Christians, that is, the anointed of the Lord, and yet our Lampes are emptic, and we defer our dayes in slumber, thinking our selues as good Christians as the best, till we be vtterly excluded from the Bride-chamber: we haue promised the Lord oftentimes to worke in his vineyard, but yet who hath entred? we are the vineyard of the Lord, and he hath dressed vs: what fruite haue we borne vnto him? we are the sheepe of Christ, and yet we know not his voice: and as *Rabel* couered her fathers Idols with sitting on them, and with a lie, so we that are the greatest sinners couer our iniquities with hypocrisie and dissembling. Such pollution of Sabbathes as neuer was, yea euen in this time of dearth and famine, drinking and drunkenness, dancing and riot, feasting and surfetting, chambering and wantonnes, swearing and forswearing, accompting gaine to be godlines, and godlines to be the burthen of the world, with a thousand greater and more grieuous calamities, as if the bird could sing in the snare, or as the

*Iere. 44. 19.**1. King. 18.*

27.

*Mat. 11. 17.**Psal. 127. 5.**Mat. 25. 3.**Mat. 21. 30.**Iob. 15. 2.**Iob. 10. 14.**Gen. 31. 34.*

*Pro. 7. 22.*  
*Mat. 3. 10.*

*Rev. 18. 4.*

*Numb. 16.*  
*12. 32.*  
*Hos. 6. 1. 2*

*Deut. 28.*  
*23. 24*

fatted oxe that runneth wilfully to the slaughter Then (beloued) let vs looke about vs: euen now is the axe of God his iudgements laid to the roote of euery mans heart, and he is accursed that feareth it not, euen now the Lord is knocking at the dore of our hearts, and if euer, let vs open vnto him, that the King of glory may come in. Euen these are the daies wherein iniquity hath gotten the vpper hand, and the loue of many is waxen cold. Therefore as the Angell warned the godly, so must we stil, Come out from among them my people, be not partakers of their sinnes, lest you beare a part of their plagues. This is the haruest of the Lord, oh let vs that be the Lords seruants gather out the wheat, lest it bee burned with the tares. There is a holy conuocation to the Lord, and the Lords ministers sound out the trumpet, if we appeare not, the earth will open her mouth and reuenge our rebellion, and swallow vs vp aliue: let vs at the length say with the Iewes, Come let vs turne vnto the Lord, for he hath spoiled vs, and he shall heale vs, hee hath smitten vs, and he shall binde vs vp, after two dayes hee shall giue vs life, and the third day hee shall raise vs vp, and we shall liue before him: if with knowledge wee follow him, to know the Lord, his rising is like the morning, and hee shall come vpon vs like raine in a drought, both the first and the latter rain vpon the earth. Let not our righteousnesse bee as the dew before the sunne rising, but put on the Lord Iesus Christ, and let none call vpon him, but such as depart from iniquity.

7 Secondly, by this we gather, that the Lord is as true in his iudgements, as in his mercies: for hee threatned by Moses saying, *If you forsake me, and fall to worshipping strange Gods (as now they did) then your beauen shall be as brasse, and your earth as yron, and your raine like dust, till they were consumed from the face of the earth.* Of all these miseries you may see in the Booke of Iudges, Samuel and Kings, to which I referre you at your leysure, as of Saul, Dauid, Ieroboam, Achab, Zidkia, and others, as in this present place: where they

they are oppressed ten yeeres together, so that heauen and earth may passe, but the word of the Lord abideth for euer.

For this cause the Prophets adde to their preaching of iudgements : *(Thus sayeth the Lord)* as if they had said, it shall neuer be altered. And if the lawes of heathen men, such as the *Medes and Persians*, might not alter, much lesse the word of the Lord, *which is like siluer purified seuen times*, should haue any drosse or changeable substance in it. Wee see the law of nature stand inuolable for euer, and shall not the law of him which made nature, bee also immutable? when the fire ceaseth to bee hote, and the water cold, then shall bee exception taken against God his iudgements, and not before. The vse of this doctrine is to cast downe the presumption of notorious sinners, who to auoyde the terrors of God his iudgements, deceiue their owne soules with this, that G O D is mercifull. So that in their most singular sinnes, they will flie to the mercies of G O D, as if they were the very bond of iniquity: yea, and these kind of people perswade themselves to bee as good Christians as any in the worlde, because they can say, the Lord is mercifull.

8 But heare me a little in one word I pray you, I am perswaded that I speake to many of these people this day. What hurt hath the Lord done vnto you that you rob him of his iustice? Shall the Prophet bee found a lyer that saith, *The Lord is iust in all his wayes, and holy in all his works*? Or shall the Apostle speake vnto truth that sayeth, *It is a iust thing with God to render affliction to them that afflict you, and release to you that are afflicted*? why shall wee then spoile God of his iudgements, vnlesse wee will depriue our selues of our owne saluation. But you will say, this serueth for the wicked, as Atheists, Turks, Pagans, Infidels, & such like, which shall haue no part with Christ. I answer, what greater wickednesse can there be than to depriue God of his iustice? Would a mortall man endure to bee accounted without

*Psal. 12. 6.*

*Dan. 6. 9.*

*Psal. 12.*

*Ts. 145. 17.*

*2. Thes. 1. 6.*

Eze. 18. 26.

Cyprian.

1 Pet. 4. 17.

Heb. 12. 6.

Mat. 25. 48.

without honesty, and shall the euerlasting King abide to be spoiled of his righteousness? Nay, the iustice of God pertaineth to such as you would be, holy persons, as well as to any. For what sayeth the Prophet, When the iust man turneth from his righteousness to doe iniquitie, he shall die in it. And *Peter* sayeth, that iudgement must beginne at the house of God: And a Father once said, God of his most deare iustice hath decreede the summe of all discipline, both in exacting and in defending: as if he had said, there is no correction of the Lord, but it proceedeth from his iustice, now the children of God are corrected, for he scourgeth euery child whom he receiueth. And therefore the iudgements of God must be thundered out aswell for the confirming of the faithfull, as the confusion of Infidels. But others there are that are so far past feeling of either mercies or iudgements, that as soone the deafe Adder will heare the voice of the charmer, as they any impression of terror for sinne. Hence commeth this custome of sinning, which euery sabboth commit their wonted iniquity, euery howre vomit out their poyson of blasphemies, and euery day violate the lawes of charity, who through their dayly staring on the sonne of righteousness, are now become starke blind, and with the continuall noyse of God his waters are made so deafe, that they can heare no goodnesse. Vnto both these sortes of people, hearken what the Lord sayeth in his Gospel, but if that euill seruant shall say in his heart, the Lord deferreth his comming, and sha I beginne to smite his fellow seruants, and to eate and drinke with the drunken, the Lord of that seruant shall come in a day that hee looketh not for, and in an howre that he knoweth not, and shal separate him, and giue him his part with vnbelieuers, there shall bee weeping and gnashing of teeth. This shalbe the end of secure Christians, and contemptuous sinners, carnall Atheists, & despisers of wholsom doctrine, which haue no part but in this present life, with endlesse and fearefull damnation in the world to come: Thus much of the first part, the circumstance of time.



9 Now let vs goe to the thing which is the second part, of the occasion. *There was a famine in the land.* This was the chiefe cause which moued these persons to trauell, the auoiding of the pinching penurie of fearefull death, by lingring till the end of this pining famine. Of all the punishments of sinne which happen in this life, there is none more vehement then famine. Therefore the Lord by the Prophet thretneth to send his arrowes of famine to breake the staffe of bread. Where he alludeth to a main battel, signifying vnto vs, first as the arrow is the fittest instrument to breake the ranke, so a famine is the sharpest weapon to dismay the couragious stomackes of rebellious sinners. For as the arrow is alway in sight, so a famine euer in sense: the arrow hurte-th, but not with a speedy death, a famine spoileth, yet with tedious misery, the arrow entred, doth procure more paine and greater wound at the pulling forth, than the falling in: euen so abundance of meat sooner dispatcheth a famished person than lingring hunger. Therefore *Dauid* put to his choice of three plagues, famine, flying & pestilence, chose the last as the most so-dainest, and therefore accompanied with lesse grieve, for that disease by the rule of Physicke, is most dangerous, which is the longest in growing. Now we may reade of many famines in the scripture: one & the first we reade of, was in the dayes of *Abraham*, another in the daies of *Izhaq* his sonne. Seuen yeeres famine was in Egypt, where *Ioseph* by the hand of God succored the Church in his fathers family. And to omit that in *Dauids* time, and that in *Abahs* time, with those in the dayes of *Iehoram* and *Zidkia*, with many others; Wee reade in the new Testament of an vniuersall famine, in the daies of *Claudius Caesar*, prophesied by *Agabus*, when the church did most notable relieue one another. Vnto the which wee may adde that at the destruction of *Ierusalem*, about forty yeeres after Christ. All which are most worthy spectacles of humane misery, and worthy examples of God his iudgements, to terrifie all them which lay in their prosperity, they shall neuer bee moued.

Eze. 5. 16

I. Sam. 24.

14. 15

Gen. 12. 10.

Gen. 26. 1

Gen. 41. 30.

2. Sam. 21. 1

1. Kin. 18. 2.

2. Kin. 6. 25.

Agi. 18. 28.



2. Kin. 6. 10

29  
Matricibus  
fabula mli-  
di.

Amo. 8. 11.

Ezek. 16  
53.

ued. There we may reade of the pittifull death of many thousands which starued in the streetes, in the face of their deereſt friends, and yet were not able to relieue them. There we may ſee how men were driuen to eate dogs, cats, rats, mice, and horſe-ſleſh: but that which is moſt miſerable, the *mothers to ſuccour their ſtomackes and bodies, with the ſlaughter and eating of their owne children*. What heart of adamant would not weepe, yea rather bleede at the ſight hereof? And yet behold a greater famine then all theſe! Is it poſſible? yea verily, a famine of the word of God, when men ſhall goe from one ſea to another, and from the North to the Eaſt, running to ſeek the word of God, and ſhall not finde it. In that day ſhall fall both the faire virgins and the young men, which ſweare by the Idols of *Samarina*, and ſay, As thy God liueth, O *Dan*, and as the God of the way of *Beerſhebah* liueth, they ſhall fall, neither ſhall they euer riſe vp againe. Is not this greater than the famine of bread? There was neuer famine ſo great, but if liberty were giuen, the famine was eaſed: but in this they ſhall haue liberty to runne to and fro, and ſhall not bee releued. There was neuer any famine wherewith men were ſo hunger-ſtarued, but ſome recovered: but in this, ſayth the Lord, They that fall ſhall neuer riſe againe. Oh that the open contemners of God his word would drinke but one droppe for a taſte of theſe fearefull iudgements: I am perſwaded that the heat of greedy ſinne would bee ſo cooled in them, that they ſhould recouer the health of their ſoules, which will neuer be, till of open prophaners they become publike profeſſors. But of all theſe famines, there is but one cauſe, which is the abuſe of the creatures of God: for ſo the equity of iuſtice requireth, that in the ſame thing wherein they ſinned, they ſhould bee puniſhed. Like as the thiefe was bound for that which hee ſtole, to reſtore foure fold. *Fulneſſe of bread* was one of the finnes of *Sodome*, and they vnderſtood not from whom they had it, becauſe they were vnmerciſul to the poore, and therefore abuſed it by vnthankfulneſſe.

II And this is a worthy doctrine to bee vrged in our dayes, wherein our abuse is greater then our want, and yet our want is such as hath not beene heard of these many yeeres. The couetous seller keepeth in his corne, and draweth vpon himselfe the curse of the poore, saying, it is scantie, it is scantie, when his Garners are full. Is not this to tell that the Lord his hand is shortned, when indeed it is lengthned? Is this to say, thou openest thy hand and fillest with thy blessing euery liuing thing? Nay, you plainly accuse the Lord of illiberality.

O detestable cruelty, who for to sat vp their owne posterities, will murder the bodies of many thousands of pouertie, yea this is more cruel then murder in the sight of G O D. Why dealst thou not plainly, and say, the Lord hath giuen abundance, yet your price must bee raised, so you should speake truly, and excuse the liberality of the Lord in excusing your owne couetous desires. But oh wretchednesse, you will not lay the fault vpon the guilty, you iustifie the couetous, whome the Lord abhorreth, and condemne the innocent liberality of him, who giueth to all freely, and casteth none in the teeth. Another sort there are more viler than those, who of this great want, which if the Lord suffer to endure, will turne to extreame famine, yet they will spend more vpon one to make him drunke, than vpon one dozen of poore folk's liues. These are the tiplers, ale-sellers, and drunkards, the very caterpillers of our country, who like the horse-leach are euer sucking, and neuer satisfied, and these onely consume much that other should not bee contented with it. Of these both Cities and Countries are replenished, and the Magistrates suffer them with little or no punishment at all: but if the poor preachers rebuke the folly, their safety is endangered by this rauinous brood, who are not ashamed to giue rayling, yea and threatening speeches, and Magistrates seruants are in greatest fault who

*Qui diuitias habet  
& paupertatem simulat, Deum,  
qui copia est, pauperem facit.*

who are not onely partakers of this vnseasonable drinking, but also deale priuately with their masters, that thole which are complained, might escape vnpunished. Thus are the poore vnreleued, the country vnprouided, the people vnanswered, the wicked vnpunished, the common weale vnreformed, the godly vncomforted, and the indgements of God haled downe vpon vs, that wee might be euerlastingly confounded.

12 *There went a certaine man.* Now are wee come to the persons that trauelled, which is the second part of this verse, which we shewed you, ended in the second verse: they are first generally described in this verse, and after specially by name in the next verses: they are of two sorts, first the parents *Elimelech* and *Naomi*, secondly, the children, *Mablon* and *Chilion*, who are all described by the place from whence they went, *Bethlehem Iudab*: it is so called because there was another *Bethlehem*, in the Tribe of *Zebulon*. and this is that *Bethlehem* which in *Genesis* is called *Ephratha*, and therefore these persons are in these two verses called *Ephrathites*, of the place where afterward Christ was borne. Then it is apparant by the booke of *Iosuah*, that the tribe of *Iudab* had the fruitfullest possession in all the land of *Canaan*, they were the greatest in number, the wisest in policie, the richest by inheritance: yet wee see when the scourge of God came, the famine inuaded their Country, and crope into the wals of *Bethlehem*, and made the wealthiest among them to flie: yet this *Elimelech*, which was as appeareth by his consanguinity of the princes of the whole Tribe, such is the vehemency of the Lords arrowes, when hee shooteth them abroad, that if King *Achab* were in his Chariot, in the midst of his host, yet one of them shall giue him a mortall wound. The vse of this doctrine is, to teach vs that if the Lord suffer his plague to continue, he will strike downe the chosen men in *Israel*, the chosen men in *England*; yea the noblest among vs, who thinke themselues in greatest security, can hee easily bring to greatest misery. Therefore you whose heads the Lord hath aduanced o-

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*Jo. 19. 15.*  
*Gen. 35. 19.*

*Iosua. 15. 2.*

*1. King. 22.*  
*34.*

*Psal. 29. 6.*  
*6. 8.*

uer your brethren, looke to your calling, for the voice of the Lord shaketh as well the *Cedars of Libanus* as the *little shrubs* in the wilderness of *Cades*, it is as easie with him to binde the Nobles in chaines, and the princes in linkes of yron, as to raise vp the poore from the dunghill to the throne. Did not his darknes couer as wel the Court of *Pharao* as the country of *Egypt*? Was not the first borne of the King destroied, as well as of the poore peasants of the dwellings of *Ham*? Yea when the *Israelites* were carried captiue to *Babylon*, their king and his children slaine before his face, his owne eyes put out, and after lead in a chaine, neither was hee spared for his throne, nor you for your dignity and wealth.

Oh that you would therefore be warned of your slippery estate, that you might auoide the heauy wrath of God, when without respect of persons hee shall iudge both quicke and dead. Let not the lots of your inheritance deceiue you, though their soile be as fruitfull as this of *Iudah*, and your possessions neuer so great: hee that in one night destroyed all the fruits of *Egypt*, can also in one howre blast your corne with dewes, and consume your possession with drought, for a fruitfull land maketh he barren for the wickednes of them that dwell therein.

13 Secondly, we note out of these words, when hee tooke his wife and children with him, an example of a religious father, and a louing husband: he might (if he had consulted with flesh and bloud) done like our husbands in these dayes, which had rather in their wandering shift about for themselves, and leaue wife and children in a sea of troubles, to sinke or swimme to some doubtfull reliefe. But the godly in old time knew that their wiues and children were as themselves, & as they were carefull to cherish their owne bodies, so they were mindfull to nourish their own families. This the Lord at the first marriage that euer was,<sup>a</sup> commanded that for a mans wife he should forsake father and mother, and they two shall be one flesh, as if he had said, parents must not hinder fellowship of wedlocke, much lesse pouertie

Psal. 149. 8.

Psal. 112. 7.

Exod. 10. 32

Exod. 11. 39

2. King. 25

a Gen. 2. 24

b Gen. 12.  
18.  
c Gen. 26. 1

d Gen. cap.  
42. 43. 44.  
1. Tim. 5. 8.

e Gen. 6.

or temporall wants : as the barke is ioined to the tree, and the flesh to the bone, if one be without the other, they both perish : so must husband and wife liue & loue together, vnlesse they will bee the slaughter-slaues of their owne destruction. We read of this practise in the Scripture, when *Abraham* by reason of a famine went downe into *Egypt*, hee tooke *Sara* his wife with him : when *Israh* by reason of a famine went to *Abimelech* the king of *Gerar*, hee tooke *Rebecca* his wife with him. How do we read of *Iacob*, how twice hee sent into *Egypt* for all his family, and the third time hee went down with all his household, his son *Ioseph* fed him five yeeres of famine, yea the Apostle saith, that hee is worse then an Infidel that provideth not for his owne family, and Christ going from his Disciples, asked them if they had wanted any thing, and they answered, nothing. Against this point of doctrine there are many that offend: some that are married by their couetous parents, who respect nothing but wealth, are so matched, as if a vine were planted in the flowing of the sea, which prospereth best when the water is lowest, euen so these are in sweetest fellowship, when one is a thousand miles from the other. Others there are vvhich in their mariages, please nothing but their eyes, which as old persons cannot see without spectacles, so they cannot find viues without the spectacles of bevvty, & these loue as long as bevvty endureth, vvhich is till they bee sicke, for sickness is the cutthroat of bevvty. Some take viues and husbands as fooles find pearls: for as they cannot discern them from pebbles, so these are ignorant of all kind of duty towards one another. From hence proceedeth all the adulteries, vvhich are dayly committed, here ariseth the fountaine of strife, contention, debate, ielousie, and also the vnhappy blowes vvhich many giue to their viues: hence it commeth, that so many Gentlemen and others are seldome at home, but eyther beyond the sea in varres or in trauell, vvhich in their vnmarried estate, vvanted nothing but viues, but now being married, vvant all things but viues. Hence it commeth, that



that they tearmed them by the odious titles of crosses, plagues, troubles, and also as I haue heard some say, the causes of their vndoing, whereas they may as well accuse the eye of his blindnesse, as their wiues of their own wilfull miserie: and to conclude, there is not one breach of loue or kindnesse between them, but it springeth from these corruptions, which then were sowed, when they intended their marriage. But oh beloued, let not the godly be drawne away with the crooked conuerlation of these contentious persons, but let them be armed with the forenamed examples of godly vnity, that as their troubled dayes were eased in the ioy of their owne loue: so let our miseries be relieved, which you suffer in wedlocke, with your comfortable agreement in Christian society, for so saith *Salomon*, <sup>e</sup>Let thy fountaine be blessed, and reioyce with the wife of thy youth: and thus much of this second doctrine.

14 Thirdly, by this we may note, that the godly are oppressed, when the wicked haue abundance: here we see the Israelites, which were the Church of God, had a famine, but the Moabits, to whome this man descended, being a cursed generation, incestuous Gentiles, had plenty and abundance, for els *Elimelech* would not haue gone thither to be relieved. This may seeme a strange thing that the godly should bee oppressed with famine, when worldlings & heathens shal wallow in their wealth. Of these *Dauid* speaketh, I haue seen the wicked strong, <sup>f</sup>and spreading himself like a bay-tree. And in another place, <sup>g</sup>They are inclosed in their owne fat; And againe he saith, <sup>h</sup>They haue their portion in this life, whose bellies thou fillest with thy hid treasure, their children haue enough, and leaue the rest of their substance to their childre. And in another place, there are no bads in their death, but they are lusty & strong, they are not in trouble like other men: & a little after, these are the wicked, yet prosper they alway. & increase in riches. The very like you may heare in *Iob*, and in the Prophet *Jeremy*. But of the righteous hee saith, and often crieth out of their afflictions, their sorrowes and

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nakednesse,

e *Pro. 5. 18.*f *Psal. 17. 14.*g *Psa. 37. 15*g *Psa. 17. 14*h *Psal. 73. 4.*i *Ver. 12.**Iob. 21. 7.**Iere. 11. 1.*



i Mat. 25.

42.43

k Mat. 8.

20

1 Heb. II.

37

Iob. 15. 19.

Iob. 16. 20.

Iob. 15. 1. 2.

Iob. 15. 12.

nakednesse, their hunger and misery, all the day long are they appointed as sheepe to the slaughter, yea our Sauour Christ pronounceth himselfe in his members, <sup>1</sup>poore, hungry, naked, horrible, thirsty, and imprisoned, <sup>k</sup>the foxes haue holes, and the birdes of the aire haue nests, but the sonne of man hath not where to rest his head. And the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, saith of the godly, <sup>1</sup>Some are stoned, some cut asunder, some slaine with the sword, some wandring abroad in goates skins and sheeps skins, destitute, oppressed, euill entreated, of whom the world was not worthy, wandring in deserts, in the mountaines, in denues and caues of the earth. Iudge now I beseech you, betweene the outward estate of the godly, and the wicked, are they not contrary? That which of the world is condemned, is of the Lord commended: yet I beseech you my brethren, be not terrified from godlines, but rather strengthened in your profession. Then wilyou say, tell vs the cause of this inequality. Our Sauour answereth it very well: *You are not (saith he) of the worl'd, if you were of the world, the world would loue his owne; and David saith, that their portion is onely in this life; but Christ saith, our reward shall be great in heauen: and againe, you shall weepe and lament, but the world shall reioyce, but your sorrow shall be turned to ioy, like a woman that reioyceth at the birth of her sonne: so as a woman in trauell hath no ease till a sonne is come into the world, neither must wee looke for any rest till our soules are deliuered out of the wombe of the body, into the kingdom of heauen. Our Sauour compareth vs to the fruitfull vine, which doth not onely abide frost, snow, storme and heate, but also at the gathering time is broken off, that the grapes might bee reached. The golde must be tried in the furnace, the siluer fined in the fire, the wheate purged in the floore, and before it be meate for man, is also ground in the mill, so must we be proued in affliction, fined in persecution, and crushed in peeces, vnder the burthen of our owne miseries, that wee may bee made prepared bread for the Lord*  
his

his owne spending.

15 Why then doth the Lord make such large promises to his Church, of plenty, seeing it endureth continuall pouerty? I answer, the Church of God must be considered after two sorts: the first, as it is cleansed in the blood of Christ, and washed pure from all outward and notorious offences, vnto which estate pertaineth all those outward promises of liberality in the Scripture. The second is the declined estate, or corrupted condition of euery one in the Church, euen vnto the worlds end: vnto this pertaineth all the punishments, persecutions, and tribulations, which the godly endure: which the Lord sendeth vpon them, that hee might by little and little scourge vs from our transgressions, and weary vs with the miseries of this life, that we might the more earnestly desire the life to come: for the Lord doth here scourge vs, that wee should not bee condemned with the world. Examples of these are most plentiful in the old Testament of the Church of the Iewes, and for as much as the perfection of the church being once lost, is like broken glasse, which can neuer bee soldered againe: so the Church shall neuer attaine those promises in this life, but they are all referred to the life to come, where shall bee no hunger, thirst, nakednesse, pouerty, trauell, famine, nor sorrow, but all teares being wiped from the eyes of the faithfull, they shall then rest from their labors, & receiue many thousand times, for euery affliction which they here endured, eternall felicity in the presence of Christ, when all worldlings shall be burned with vnquenchable fire.

16 Fourthly, in that they went downe to the wicked Moabites, and there tarried, wee note that it is lawfull for the godly in the time of necessity, to craue helpe or reliefe of the very enemies of God, so they be not polluted with their superstitions. For prooofe hereof wee haue the former examples of *Abraham* in *Egypt*, of *Isaac* in *Gerar*, of *Moses* in *Midian*, when hee fled from *Pharaoh*, of the spies of *Israel*, which lodged in the house of *Rahab*. So did the Lord command *Ioseph* in a dream,

Gen. 12. 7

& 26. 1.

Exo. 2. 22. 2

*Ios. 2. 1.*  
*Math. 2. 13.*  
*Iob. 4. 7.*

to take *Mary* and *Christ*, and to goe into *Egypt*, to saue *Christ* from *Herod*: So did *Christ* aske water of the woman of *Samaria* when hee was weary, with infinite other testimonies, which the godly may find in the scripture. But the vse of this point is, that although the Lord hath permitted this liberty, yet wee must take heed of two things: first, that wee neuer receiue any thing with condition of Religion, or doing the least thing against our owne knowledge, for Idolaters desire nothing more, then to winne mens soules to the Diuell. Secondly, wee may not goe vnto such, when wee may be eased of the godly, for it is free necessity that constraineth, not necessary liberty that permitteth: By this we learn, what to iudge of them which are daily at talk and table with the wealthiest Papists, Atheists, and carnall prophane persons, who care not for the losse of Religion, so they may gaine by their friendshippe, esteeming more the feathers of a rich man, though vngodly, then the bloud of a poore godly Christian: they vse them too cōmonly for wealth & commodity, not for need, or necessity: these are seasoned in the leauen of vnrighteousnes, baked in the ouen of hipocrisie, and shall one day bee burned in the fire of euerlasting destruction, for they which for gaine loue their company in this life, shall bee partakers of their rewards in the life to come.

*Psa. 37. 18.*  
 19.

*Psa. 37. 18.*  
 19

*Gen. 45. 45*

*I. Kjn. 18*  
 13.

17 Fifthly, by this we note, that the Lord doth euer prouide for his faithfull seruants in all their miseries. Wee see here these Iewes satisfied with plenty in *Moab*, that were almost famished with penury at home: therefore saith *Dauid*, *The Lord knoweth the dayes of upright men, and their inheritance shall bee perpetuall, they shall not bee confounded in the perilous time, and in the dayes of famine they shall haue enough.* Most notable is that speech of *Ioseph* to his brethren, telling them that God sent him before to prouide victuals for them, in that seuen yeeres famine. So hee stirred vp *Obadiab*, which hid fifty Prophets in one caue, and fifty in another, feeding them with bread and water, during the

the time of famine. Hee prouided for *Eliab*, first, by the rauens, and after by the widdow of *Sarephtha*, multiplying her oyle and meale, for *Eliab*, her selfe, and her sonne. So he sent *Elisha* to warne the Sunamite woman of the seuen yeeres famine, that shee should flie for her selfe, and liue where shee could. I might bee infinite in this point, and declare the bountifull liberality of the Lord, who euer prouideth one remedie or other to satisfie the continual prayers of them that feare him: for wee may say as *Paul* saith, We are afflicted, yet we are not in distresse, in pouerty, yet not ouercom of pouerty, wee are persecuted, and yet not forsaken, cast down, but wee perish not. This is the mercifull kindnes of him who giueth food to the young rauens that call vpon him, and maketh his sunne to rise and shine both vpon good and bad. Yea wee our owne selues haue experience in our owne Country, for we which were wot with our abundance to helpe other Nations about vs: yet now in our want wee are succoured by them. How should the poor in many places be relieued, if it were not for the corne which commeth ouer sea, therefore as the seuen plentifull yeers in *Egypt*, succoured the seuen deare yeeres: euen so the Lord relieueth the misery of one time, by the multitude of another. Therefore my brethren, let vs not say, the Lord hath forgotten vs: for although our desires bee not satisfied, yet our bodies are not famished, yea, the Lord testifieth, that hee is as vnwilling to punish our deserts, and vterly to deprive vs of our maintenance, as wee are to depart from our pleasant pastime or dainty belly cheare. Poore *Lazarus* that was not releued with the rich mans crummes, yet was he comforted with the licking of the dogs: so much doth the Lord affect liberality and kindnes, that he commandeth bruite beasts to execute his goodnes vpon his seruants.

18 Now let vs proceede to the second part of this Scriptures and seeing wee haue brought these strangers to their Inne at *Moab*, let vs heare their enter-tainment, & those things that hapned vnto them after they

1. King. 17.

4. 10.

1. Kin. 31

2. Cor. 4. 8. 9

Gen. 24. 10.

they came thither, for the parts wee haue in the beginning set downe, which I trust you remember, and therefore wee will to the words. *And they continued there.* This is as much to say, as they found entertainment answerable to their expectation: they had liberty of residence granted, and obtained a place for their dwelling in safety. Where wee first note the gentlenesse or humanity of these heathen Moabites, who had learned by nature this point of curtesie, which is friendly to succour poore harborlesse strangers: and no doubt but hee that watcheth the descending of sparrowes on the ground, directed this iourney to *Moab*, for accomplishment of his own counsell, and prepared the hearts of these people with fauour to relieue them. For as before he guided the iourney of *Abrahams* seruant to the City of *Nachor*, where *Rebecca* was, and framed her answer according to his praier: euen so hee conducted these to *Moab*, where *Ruth* was, & tempered the hearts of the wicked to giue these pilgrimes a dwelling place among them. By the which we are taught what friendship or loue wee owe to strangers which are come among vs, yea though wee know not the purpose of their hearts, yet wee must doe good vnto them for the proportion of their bodies: that is, because they are mé. This is not a law written onely in the booke of God, but imprinted in the very nature of euery one. We see these Moabites doe it by nature, and yet they had no religion in them, we know how the King of *Egypt* gaue commandement for *Abraham*, that none should hurt him, or any of his possessions. Read but the Acts of the Apostles, you shall see how barbarous nations receiued the Church with curtesie, and some vpon their report belieued the doctrine of Christ: nay, the very brute beasts (if there be any truth in history,) haue obserued this part, to loue men as men. *Romulus* is said to be nurled of a she-Wolfe, *Hieron* King of *Syracuse* by bees, *Semiramis* of birds, *Habides* King of *Tartessus* of a Hind. *Cyrus* the Persian of a bitch, *Pelias* of a Mare, *Paris* of a Beare, and *Aegisthus* of a shee-Goate: These are either true



true in the letter, or in the morall, that either beasts or men neuer so sauage, loued not onely their owne kind, but euen strangers because they were men. What shal wee then say to this beast-like behauiour of many among vs, who will hardly permit poore Christian strangers to harbour among vs: if it were not for that they are men, and the children of *Adam* like our selues, yet because they call vpon the name of Christ, being of the houthold of faith, let vs doe good vnto them. But some will say, what shall wee doe vnto them, if they will not ioyne with vs in our religion? I answered, none must be of *Abrahams family* but those which wil be circumcised, that is, none must dwell with thee, but such as will be of thy profession: yet thou maist for humanity or curtesie receiue a Turke or a Pagan, a Iew or an Insi dell, Papist or Heretike, to talke or table for a night or a smal time, so thou keepe thy selfe from his pollutions. So did *Iacob* feast his idolatrous father in law and kinsmen, when they pursued him to the mount of *Gilead*, with purpose to hurt him, and our Sauour Christ biddeth vs to feede our enemies, and to giue them drinke if they thirst. So did *Elischah* to the host of the Sirians, who being sent to take him, yet when he had taken them and lead them to the City, he suffered the King to doe them no hurt, but refreshed them with meate and drinke, and sent the away in safety. For our outward courteous receiuing of Infidels is like coales of fire, to draw them in loue with our in ward religion. Wee know how the Lord commanded the Iewes to bee good vnto strangers, because they were strangers in *Egypt*. Wee know how the Lord commended the strange Samaritan beyond the priest and the Leuite, because hee succored the poore wounded Iew which had fallen among theeues. And truly we our selues may bee strangers in other Countries, therefore let vs doe good vnto them now, that wee may receiue the like of them againe, for this is the law and the Prophets.

19 Then *Elimelech*: when they had escaped one danger, they fell into another sorrow, when by the merci-

Gen. 17. 13.  
10.

Gen. 31. 34  
2 Kin. 6. 23

2. Kin. 6. 23

Luc. 10. 30.  
38



full kindnes of the Lord they were iointly come together in *Moab*, and there quietly seated, scaped the arrowes of famine, by the hand of God, the father of the family, the nearest and the dearest vnto them, dieth in plenty.

Where wee note the very lot of all the godly, namely, that the end of one sorrow is the beginning of another, like the drops of raine distilling from the toppe of a house, when one is gone another followeth, like a shippe vpon the sea, being on the top of one waue, presently is cast downe to the foot of another, like the seed which being spread by the sower is hanted by the foules, being green and past their reach is endangered by frost and snow, being passed the winters hurt, by beasts in summer, being ripe is cut with the sickle, threshed with the flaille, purged in the floore, ground in the Mill, baked in the ouen, chewed in the teeth, and consumed in the stomacke. This made *Dauid* say, *Great are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord deliuereth them out of all.* But bee not discomfited O my brethren, for thorough many afflictions must we enter into the kingdom of heauen, and by affliction we are made like to the son of God. But to the matter. Wee see here their sweet fellowship is preuented by death, which indeede is the end of all worldly friendship. This is a good lesson for all worldlings to remember, how the Lord disappointeth all their purposes, and ouerthroweth their counsels, more vainer then vanity. The marchant hauing obtained his banke, promiseth rest and security to himselfe, the husbandman hauing gathered his fruits, neuer doubteth but he shal spend them, and prouideth for more: the Gentleman comming to his lands, thinketh his reuenues and pleasant life will endure alway, like the Apostles when Christ was transfigured in the mount, presently they would build tabernacles of residence: but as the cloud came betwixt them & heauen, and bereaued them of their purpose: euen so sodainely will death come and depriue you of your profits, call the Marchant from his banke, the husbandman

*Psa. 34. 13.*

*Act. 16. 22.*

*Heb. 2. 10*

*Math. 17. 4.*

man from his farme, the Gentleman from his lands, the Noble man from his honour, the Prince from his kingdome, the Lady from her pleasures, as this *Eli-melech* was sodainely from wife and children.

20 Secondly, by these words we note the goodnes of God toward both the dead man, and also wife and children: for no doubt, but they all desired to bee settled in some place or other, & here the Lord suffereth the husband with wife and family, to be quietly seated before their separation. He might haue called him away in his iourney, as he was comming, & then oh how would it haue grieved both him & them, him to leaue a poore comfortlesse widdow and children behind, without dwelling or maintenance, for home again they could not return by reason of the famine, and to go forth on the iourney without a guide, was like as if a ship were set on the sea without a Mariner. Therefore in suffering them all to come safe to *Moab*, and there to liue, till they got fauour and dwellings, and also maintenance, was a singular fauour of the Lord towards both, that howsoever they were afflicted, yet they were not left destitute. And this teacheth vs that in all our afflictions wee receiue especiall blessings at the hand of God, for this end that we should not be swallowed vp of sorrow. There is no sicknes, but it is either short and sharpe, or else tedious and light, if it bee sodaine and very extreame, the continuance of it is but short, if it be long and tedious, it hath some time of ease, some time of more quietnesse, so that in all our miseries wee may say with the godlie, If the Lord had not bin on our side, we had bin swallowed quick, he tempereth the sodainest showres with least continuance, and the longest Winter hath many faire dayes: be strong therefore my brethren and sisters, for surely the Lord wil stablsh your hearts, feare not all the dangers of the world: though as many troubles compasse vs, as there were *Sirians* about *Elishah*, yet lift vp your eyes, there are many thousands more with vs, then are against vs. He that suffereth none to be tempted aboue their power, will

*Rom. 2. 7.*

*Psa. 124. 3.*

*2. Kin. 6. 20*

will not lay more vpon vs then wee are able to beare : but as he wrestled with *Jacob* with one hand, hee helde him vp with the other : so though hee afflicte with one arme, he shall sustaine with the other.

*Deut. 7. 3. 4*

*1. Kin. 11. 4*

*Exod. 3. 21.*

*Neb. 9. 1. 3.*

3.

<sup>21</sup> *Which tooke them wiues.* Now we are come to the children, and the holy Ghost expresseth the friendship which they receiued of the Moabites, after the death of the father, which is their marriage with their daughters: where first of all it may be demanded in this place, seeing the Lord forbiddeth all strange marriages, whether these sonnes of *Elimelech* did not offend against the law? wee know that the vnmarried are at liberty, to marry whom they will, onely in the Lord: now the Moabites were heathen people, and strangers from God his couenant, and therefore these persons married not in the Lord. To which I answere briefly, that the Lord forbiddeth marriage with Infidels, for two causes, first, when wee may lawfully, and without danger ioyne our selues to them that are godly, and will presumptuously for worldly respects, run to the daughters of men: secondly, that we should refrain from all such marriages, where wee are like to bee drawne away from our profession, as wee see in *Salomon*. But these sonnes of *Elimelech* offended in none of these. For first they were now strangers, and had no other choice, and secondly it appeareth by that which followeth, that they were both well perswaded in Religion. For as *Moses* married a Madianitish woman, & was blamelesse, and *Salmon* the son of *Nahasson*, the Prince of the Iewes, married with *Rahab*, (which both were the parents of *Boaz*, mentioned hereafter) and was faultlesse, nay it was done by the permission of *Iosuah*, and therefore lawfull: euen so these strange Iewes moued with the same reasons, chosed the like marriages. But some will say, the Iewes which had married strange wiues in the captiuity of *Babylon*, might haue alleadged this against *Nebemiah*, that they were in captiuity, and had no women to take but strangers. To the which I answere, if they had so obiected, they had spoken vntruth, and so would

would *Nehemiah* haue replied, for there were Iewish women captiues as well as men, and further I say, that this their marrying of strange women, was the cause of the destruction of many Iewish women, who being forsaken of their owne people, must of necessity bee married to Infidels, which could neuer returne to *Ierusalem*. Againe, the sonnes of *Elimelech* by their marriage gained greater fauour of the *Moabites*, but especially, the hand of God was in it, that when they both should be dead, *Ruth* might be married to *Boaz*, and bee made a mother of *Christ*.

22 First therefore wee note of this, that as these *Moabites* were kind to the father in giuing him residence, so they were louing to the sons, in giuing them wiues: a notable example of humane curtesie, giuen vnto vs by these heathens, that wee with the like fauour should entertaine strangers. But many couetous parents in these dayes, which would bee accounted Christians, are so farre from doing this vnto strangers, that they will hardly doe the like to their owne naturall countymen, rather imitating the vngodly *Laban*, who made marchandise of his daughters, then godly *Caleb*, in the bestowing them on *Othniel*, be he neuer so poore, if they had deserued well of Church or common wealth, rather desiring to aduance their posterity in the glory of the world, then to discharge their duties in the presence of God. They will say they ayme at this, the feare of the Lord, when as if they had matched their children with Turkes or Infidels, they would not, or could not bee more prophane then these, sauing onely these are outwardly obedient to a Christian prince, that they might with more liberty follow their licentious Atheisme, when as peraduenture the other would not so dissemble: so that goods, and not goodnes, the world and not the word, earthly vanity, and not heauēly felicity, our parents ayme at. But what shall wee say of them that force their children, not onely to match against their mindes, but to marrie with publike Papists, and known Recusants, only for things or this life.

Truly

Gen. 31. 15  
Iudg. 1. 13.

Dent. 7. 5.

Truly, I answere, that it is against these that the Lord speaketh, when he saith, You shal not take their daughters to your sonnes, nor giue your daughters to their sonnes: but as they haue married without the counsell of the Lord, in murdering the fruits of their owne bodies, euen so they shall prosper without the blessing of God, in confounding the soules of their owne posterity: and as the children of the Iewes which were borne of strange women, were separated from the new founded Temple, euen so these shall be excluded from the euerlasting *Ierusalem*.

23 *And they tarried there.* This time of their abode in *Mosab*, signifieth the great continuance of this misery, first, for the Iewes at home, who endured famine: and secondly, for these abroad, which liued among Infidels tenne yeeres together. It is a fearefull thing with vs, that wee haue but one yeeres famine, oh then wee thinke that the Lord hath forgotten to be mercifull. But wee haue heard already of famines of great continuance, that in *Iosephs* time was seuen yeeres together, that in *Dauids* time was three yeeres and a halfe, and this misery lasted ten yeeres together. Wherein many godly persons did patiently endure it. How is it then that for this litle death among vs, there are so great exclamations for corne and plenty, such horrible blasphemies, against the Lord himselte, saying: Shall this endure alwayes? Was there euer any poore people thus afflicted? Is this the fruite of the Gospell? Are these the fauours of God and his righteousness, in keeping his promise? with such like, too horrible to bee suffered, as if the Lord were not able to relieue vs, or else were vniust in punishing our sinnes: how can that bee, seeing hee calleth for repentance, and amendment, and then promiseth plenty and abundance? These Saints endured some three, some seuen, and others tenne yeeres famine, and yet wee say, was there euer such a people thus afflicted like to vs with one yeares dearth?

They were driuen to wander abroad in their enemies



mies countrie for many yeeres together, shall we then thinke it such a misery to goe two or three miles for our corne? They aduentured the losse of their liues, and we are afraide of the lessening and diminishing of our goods. And shall we yet say, there was neuer any people tormented like vnto vs? Yea, I adde this, that euen at this day, there are people in the world, which scant in all their liues doe eate any bread, but onely the barke of trees, with some other vnseasonable fish: others liue of the rootes of the earth, some on the fruires of trees. And what shall I say more, our wickedness is greater then our want, our sore is smaller then our sinne, our transgressions haue deserued to be punished with the scourge, and yet we are scarce corrected with the rod, our complaints are greater then our hurt, and our murmuring exceedeth our miseries, therefore wee haue greater cause to tremble at that which hangeth ouer our heads, then to feare or crie for this which wee already suffer, for it is hardly the beginning of sorrow.

24 *So Mablom and Chilion.* Now when they were compassed about with the friendes of their wiues, which did promise security, then after a few yeeres spent in safetie, the Lord called them away after their father. Where wee see our former doctrine iustified, that the end of one sorrow was the beginning of another. When they were most like to continue, then they gaue ouer, as it were in the armes of their wiues, and the sight of their aged mother, to whom no doubt, this was the greatest griefe of all other, that now being left destitute both of husband and children, she should without comfort liue with the Moabites, and without ioy returne againe vnto her owne Country, as a bird robbed of her young ones. Yet seeing this is our worldly lot still to endure misery, let vs set both our shoulders vnder the burthen, if it bee too heauy let vs flee to the finisher of our faith with zealous & earnest praiers, desiring him either to ease or to remoue his hand. But seeing we haue spoken of this  
before



before, this shall suffice at this time to serue for a remembrance.

25 *Then shee arose.* When her friendes were departed, and her selfe left comfortles, yet the Lord remembered her, for euen then came the rumor vnto her, that the famine was ceased in Iewrie, that the Lord had visited the sicknesse of his people, and restored the plenty of the earth againe, and therefore it is a time for her to be hasting home againe: for here the holy Ghost setting down her return, & the cause of the same, sheweth that it was euen then when her children were dead, for what should a godly woman liue there, where were none that could strengthen her in the wayes of the Lord, but rather prouoke her to embrace infidelity? And againe, euen at that time when shee was most comfortlesse for the losse of her children, came this rumor vnto her of the restoring of her Country, so that now *Naomi*, thou art here in *Moab* a sorrowfull pilgrime, goe home to thy Country, and bee a ioyfull inhabitant: indeed thy children are dead, but thou shalt haue a greater comfort of thy ancient acquaintance. What knowest thou, but now the Lord hath called thee to consolation, whereas of late thou mightest thinke hee had wrought thy confusion. By which wee first of all note how the Lord watcheth to relieue and comfort in due time, as saith Saint *Paul*, God comforted mee by the comming of *Titus* least I should bee swallowed of sorrow: and this is the property of his Maiesty, like a nurse to stand by his children, and let them awake, but take them vp as soone as they crie; He suffered *Peter* to sinke, but not to perishe, *Paul* to be imprisoned with *Silas*, & to be whipped, but euen then the earth quaked, and gaue comfort to the prisoners. Oh what Angels penne or tongue can expresse this goodnesse that euer bringeth good tidings in the midst of sorrow: When my soule fainted within mee (saith *Ionah*) I remembered the Lord, and my prayer came vnto him in his holy Temple, *Ion. 2.7.* My heart and my flesh doe faile mee, but the Lord is my portion

on

on for euer. *Psal. 73. 26.* Consider this I beseech you, and beleue verilie, that you shall haue some cause of comfort in the nuddest of sorrow, for if nothing else, then these things must relieue vs in all the sorrowes of life (saith Saint *Augustine*) our loue toward God, our godly deuotion, our assured hope of mercy, and the presence of the holy Ghost.

26 By this wee note, that the Lord deferreth to help till greatest necessity, euen as hee stayed the stroke of *Abraham*, when he was at the very instant to cutte off little *Isaacks* necke. So wee reade that when the King of *Assiria* had inuaded the kingdome of *Ezechia*, wonne his Cities, subdued his Country, conquered his people, and had not left him two thousand horsemen, and being destitute of all helpe, then the Lord raised vp the King of *Ethiop*, who called the *Assirians* from the siege of *Ierusalem*. What shall I say of *Lazarus* raised from death? Of the deliuerance of *Peter* out of the hands of *Herod*, the day before hee should haue beene martyred? Of the shipwracke wherein *Paul* was, and yet not one of them were lost. And excellent is that of Christ, sleeping in the shippe on a pillow, suffered his Disciples to bee so long tossed with the violence of the sea, till they cried out, Lord saue we perish, and then hee awaked, rebuked the rage of the winds, and stilled the stormes of the sea, & a peaceable calme followed. This is that preseruatue against desperation, which must stay our minds on the leasure of the Lord: wee must not at the first look for out desires, but as *Abraham* and *Zacharia* were old before they had any children, and yet in the end the Lord promised, and also performed: euen so when we haue least hope for obtaining of our desires, we most often receiue the: for the Lord deferreth our requests for the triall of our faith and patience, that like as the wheat corne groweth not till it bee dead: euen so his works doe not answere our expectation, till they seeme to vs impossible, that as the most pretious pearles are farthest brought, and longest in comming, when wee haue them we keepe them more carefully, euen so his excellent

Gen. 22. 10

II.

2. Kin. 19. 3

Ioh. 11. 43.

Act 12. 7. 8

Act 27. 44.

Math. 8. 25.

26.

1. Cor. 15

36.

1. Cor. 15

36.

excellent mercies being with difficulty obtained, shold be esteemed more thankfully. Therefore be of good comfort, you that now sorrow, for you shall be comforted, you that now hunger for you shall be satisfied, you that now weep, for you shall laugh, the Lord wil shortly come, beare but a little, and hee will wipe away all teares from your eyes, and then oh how happy shall they be which haue trusted in him.

25 *That the Lord had visited.* This is the last part of this Scripture, being the reason that moued her to returne into her Country. Oh it is, as if the holy Ghost had said, The Lord looked vpon the afflicted estate of his people, and supplied their want of food. To visite, in the scriptures, is taken two wayes, first to punish, as when God sayeth in the second commandement, that hee will visite the sinne of the fathers vpon the children, vnto the third and fourth generation: secondlie, it signifieth some times to pardon, or to shew mercy as that of *Zachary*. The Lord hath visited and redeemed his people, that is, hee hath shewed mercy in redeeming his people. In this latter sense it must bee taken in this place. Now the word properly signifieth to goe to see, and is referred to them that are sicke, which by a Metaphor is applyed to sinne, for sinne is the sicknes of the soule, and is very fitly applyed to punishments sent of God, for when he scourgeth, he commeth to see as hee said of *Sodome*, I will goe down and see whether it be altogether so, if not that I may know: for he cometh to see vs in our miseries, as a Physitian to his Patient, whom he hath first or before made sicke with his potion or corasue, and bringeth a whole some or speedy remedy with him. Where wee note the miserable estate of men in the sicknesse of sinne, or vnder any of God his iudgements, as dearth and famine, war or pestilence, that euen as sicke persons are not able to helpe or comfort themselves, or to take any pleasure in their wealth, though they possessed the whole world: so if we be oppressed in the punishments of our iniquitie, wee cannot, or may not rest in our selues, but

*Exod. 10. 5.*  
*& 32. 34.*

*Luk. 2. 68*

*Hos. 4. 9.*  
*Mat. 23. 43*

but in the Lord our Phisitian and Watchman: for if the Lord shut who can open, if he wound who can heale, if he curse who can blesse? he that hath the bond or writing must discharge the debt, and the Lord that stroke must bind vs vp againe. Oh my dearely beloued brethren: now are the children come to the birth, and there is no strength to be deliuered, for this is the day of tribulation: now are we in the ballance of the Lord, either to visite our offences with his famine, or to scourge our sinnes with the rod of dearth, if either of both continue what end can we looke for but the pining of our bodies, and the consuming of our soules? Whether shal wee goe to escape the iudgements of the Lord? wee are already clogged with his yrons, and fast boltred, if wee stroue to shake them off, what doe wee else but rebell against the power of the highest? If they continue, we are but miserable sinners, and can looke for nothing but the fearefull day of execution. Let vs turn to the Iudge before that day, and send vp our prayers as our dearest friends vnto his sonne, that he may visite vs with the forgiuenesse of our sinnes, that he may sue out our pardon, and be entreated for our transgressions, that we may obtain the release of our present miserie, the remouing of his iudgements, the encrease of the fruites of the earth, that he vould visit vs in giuing our daily bread, to satisfie the poore with his goodness, and giue vs all the bread of this life, to banish our dearth, and the bread of life to escape damnation. And thus much for this time. Now let vs giue praise to GOD.

Esa. 37. 3.

The end of the first Lecture.

E

The

## The second Lecture.

Ruth. Chap. 1. verse, 7. to the 15.

- 7 Wherefore shee departed out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with her, and they went on their way to returne vnto the Land of Iudah.
- 8 Then Naomi said vnto her two daughters in-law, Goe, yeturne each of you vnto her owne mothers house: the Lord shew fauour vnto you as you haue done with the dead, and with me.
- 9 The Lord grant that either of you may find rest in the house of her husband: and when shee had kissed them, they lift up their voice and wept.
- 10 And they said vnto her, surely wee will returne with thee vnto thy people.
- 11 But Naomi said: turne againe my daughters: for what cause will you goe with me? are there any moe sonnes in my wombe, that they may be your husbands?
- 12 Turne againe my daughters: goe your way, for I am too old to haue an husband, If I should say, I had hope, and if I had a husband this night, yea, if I had borne sonnes.
- 13 Would yee tarry for them till they were of age? would you bee deferred for them from taking any husbands? nay my daughters, for it grieveth mee much for your sake, that the hand of the Lord is gone out against me.
- 14 Then they lift up their voice and wept againe, and Orpah kissed her mother in Law and departed, but Ruth abode with her still.



N these words is expressed, how Naomi departed out of Moab, to goe into the land of Iewry. The words diuide themselves into two parts: the first is the journey, in this seventh verse. The second part is the communication, in the next seven verses. The journey



journey is described by the persons, which were *Naomi* and her two daughters in Law.

The communication which they had by the way, principally consisteth in the perswasion of *Naomi* to her daughters, that they should returne backe againe, and first shee speaketh in the eight and nine verses. Her speech containeth two parts, the first is the counsell she giueth, to the in these words, *Go returne*. The second is her prayer for them, which is double, or consisting of two parts. The first is generall, in these words, *The Lord shew fauour*, to the end of that verse. The second is speciall in the ninth verse, in these words, *The Lord grant you that you may find rest, &c.* Which being spoken, they lift vp their voice and wept, being sorrowful for this news, and therefore they answer in the tenth verse, that they will goe with her to her people. In the next verse to the foureteenth, *Naomi* confirmeth her former counsell by waighty arguments, which are expressed in her questions, and they are taken from their second marriages.

The first is the eleuenth verse: that shee had no moe sonnes to be their husbands, neither already born, or which hereafter might be borne, therefore their labour would be but lost if they went with her, seeing she could prouide them no mo husbands. This is amplified in the eleuenth and twelfth verse.

The second reason is in the thirteenth verse, that although she had now children born, yet it would be too long to stay for them till they were of age: much more, shee hauing none borne: and lost her daughters should thinke shee cared not for them, shee addeth in the thirteenth verse, that it grieved her more for their sakes, that is, the loue shee beareth to them, then for her owne, but it is the hand of God, and therefore she is contented. Lastly, in the 14. verse is declared the effect of this communication what it wrought, for *Orpah* departed as a womā, ouercom by these worldly perswasions, but *Ruth* abideth still with her. Of these let vs briefly speake in order as they lie, by the permission



and assistance of the Almighty.

2 And *shee arose*. This iourney of *Naomi* to her own people, as in the former verse we heard, was vnder-taken when shee heard that the Iewes were deliuered from their famine: so it is more commendable if wee consider the obiections, lets & hinderances, that may bee made against it. First, the way was very long betwene *Moab* and *Bethleem*, which might terrifie an old woman: but if any say, that it was no longer to returne then it was to come down: I answer, when she came thither, shee had her husband and children to beare her company: but now shee was to returne alone, and therefore the iourney would bee the more tedious. Secondly, the consideration of her age might haue hindered this trauell, for her withered body wold bee weered in the iourney: and what knew shee but that shee might die in the iourney, and that among strangers, who peraduenture would haue no regard of her age, honour, or honesty: againe, no doubt, but shee had some wealth in *Moab*, which of necessity shee must be constrained to leaue behind her, and for euer to loose, with many other such grieuous thoughts, which might accumber her troubled breast. But notwithstanding all these, shee proceedeth on her intended iourney, committing her selfe to the preservation of God in all places, who shee knew would giue her some comforts for the aduersity she had endured.

3 Where first of all we note the duty of all the godly, if with *Naomi* they are far from the company of the faithfull, or compelled to depart from them vpon the like occasion, as famine, pouerty, persecution, and such like, that when occasion shall bee giuen, they returne with *Naomi* to the temple, to the people, to the Arke, to the gospel of the Lord. For as God said to *Eliab*, when he was in mount *Horeb*, What dost thou here *Eliab*? euen so, he speaketh to all persecuted pilgrims, & poore true Christians which are at the gates and Tables of carnall Atheists, the enemies of Christ, What do you here? there is corne and bread in *Israel* againe, the Church,

your

your Brethren haue now receiued maintenance: return to the place of sacrifice, they that worship must worship God at *Ierusalem*: the mountaines of *Samaria* are no place of God his worship, but at *Shilo* is his tabernacle and his dwelling in *Sion*. This wee may read praesised of the ancient fathers long ago. When *Moses* had dwelt forty yeeres in *Madian*, then the Lord bid him returne to his poore brethren againe. *Dauid* being in great security with the King of *Gath*, yet the Lord wold not suffer him there to dwell. And as the Israelites might not dwell with the Egyptians, but must go into the land of *Canaan*, so the Lords people must abide but where he appointeth them. And as the *Shunamite* woman, after the seuen yeares famine, returneth to her wonted dwelling, euen so must not we linger with Recusant Papists, Atheists, swearers, blasphemers, and open despisers of God his Ministers and ministry.

4 Secondly, wee may note in this verse a godly example of holy obedience, & commendable friendship, for here the daughters in law are going with their mother to the land of Iewry. Where, either for religion or loue, which they beare to their mother in law, they forsake both Country and friends to goe with her: was it not sufficient for them to take strangers for their husbands, who being dead, and they at liberty, but they must goe from their owne kindred, with a mother in law: was it not well for them to abide with her so long as shee would abide with them, and was able to maintaine them: but now when shee had forsaken her dwelling and wealth, must they accompany her in her pouerty. Surely, it seemeth, that as *Paul* sayeth to the Corinthians, hee sought not theirs but them, so these women desire rather the presence then the wealth of *Naomi*, O excellent obedience and godly friendship, worthy to be registred with eternall memory! They had not past ten years space to learn this point of Religion, that it is, true friendship to loue at all times, whether it be in wealth or prosperity, in want or aduersity: we haue

Iohn 2. 22.

Exod. 2. 11.

1. Sam. 27.

• 9.

1. King. 8

Pro. 17. 17.

1. King. 19.

17

Pro. 17. 17.

many old professors in Christianity, which haue not profited thus much in twenty, thirty or forty yeeres profession. They say to their neighbours, as *Ioram*s messengers said to *Iehu*, is it peace? so they aske, is it wealth? is it riches? is it honor, or is it fauour of Prince or Gentleman that dwelleth neere them? As if they should say, if thou be wealthy, thou shalt haue my friendship, but if thou bee poore, then as *Nabal* answered *Dauids* messenger, what is *Dauid*? and what is the son of *Ishai*? so what art thou, I care not for thy company, get thee from my presence, I cā abide no such beggers. Is this the fruit of Religion, condemned of the heathens, abhorred of the brute beasts, hated of the wicked, and yet practised of or among Christians? surely, I had rather be a friendly Moabite, then a thousand such carnall Israelites: yea the very ciuill honest men among vs, will rise in iudgement against vs in this point: they will liue without hipocrisie, we dissemble in al vain glorie, our friendship is like the company of the Dolphin, if it be faire weather, she will neuer be from the shippe, but if a storme come, shee withdraweth her fellowship. Away with this most beastlike, yea. rather vnnaturall smiling vpon prosperity, but grim and strange countenances vpon the afflicted, either loue at al time, which is *Salomons* friendship, or loue at no time, which is *Sathans* amity.

§ *Then said Naomi*. The counsell that this godly *Naomi* giueth vnto her daughters, is simply that they shuld returne to their owne parents, as if shee should say vnto them. Be aduised my daughters, some will think you very vnnaturall, that you forsake your owne mothers, to goe with me your mother in law, and forsake your owne Country to goe vnto a strange place: the iourney is long and tedious, you are tender and weake, better returne before wee bee far gone, to bee wise too late is to repent too soone, care not for me, the Lord will enable me as well to goe alone, as with your company. Where wee first of all note a most godly example of mother-like loue; and godly charity: for if *Naomi* had

had gone alone, it could not chuse but bee far more dangerous then with company: and none could receiue any disaduantage by her counsell, beside her selfe, yet wee see shee careth not for her owne commodity, so she might procure the welfare of her daughters. Shee might haue friendly accepted their owne proffers, and if any dangers had come, shee might haue said, shee did not entreat them, it was their owne vpsseeking, yet shee dealeth more plainly with them in telling them the danger, & as before, they desire more her company then her wealth, euen so now shee loueth their company well, but counselleth their safety better. This is the duty of all that feare God, as the Apostle saith, *Let euery man seeke anothers, and not their owne good*, this was so deare vnto the Lord himselfe, that he commanded by *Moses*, that if their neighbours cattell went astray, they should bring them home againe. Doth the Lord take care of oxen, and not much more of men? but oh where is the carefull keeping of this commandment? now euery man saith, euery man for himselfe, and God for vs all: But rather, how shall the Lord bee for vs, when wee are not for one another? Now the wicked world is full of deceitfull bargaines, now mens houses and lands are bought ouer the heads of their young and vnthrifty sonnes: now mens farmes and leases are forestalled by others, that they themselues cannot enioy them: such buying and selling, cosening and deceyuing, borrowing and lending vpon vsury, taking of fines, rayling of rents, vndoing of the poore, and thrusting the weakest to the wal, as if charity were forgotten, and the precept of the Lord had neuer been written, and finally, as though all were our own which wee can get in our handling. Many giue counsell like Lawyers for their fees, but few like *Naomi*, for their conscience. They licke their owne fingers, as the Prouerbe goeth, but few will cast any salt on their neighbours meate, if they can get aduantages of their neighbours vpon statutes, they sue the extremity, as if they were infidels. They will not say as *Abraham* to *Lot*. If

2. Cor. 10.

24

Deut. 22. 7.

Gen. 22. 9.

Phil. 2. 3.  
 Le. 19. 14

Le. 22. 13.

1. Tim. 5.  
 16

Pro. 15. 10

If thou take the right hand, I will take the left, that is my brother, my neighbour, take thou the choice, I wish not thy wrong, aske counsell, and let there bee no occasion of strife betweene vs: men will hardly giue either coat or cloake in these daies, by suffering iniurie they will rather take both, and although they thinke it better to giue almes then to take, yet they had rather take bribes and rewards then to giue. Oh my beloued, let vs at the length bee ruled by the counsell of the Lord, and esteeme better of others then of our selues, helpe as many as we can, but hinder none: cursed are they that lay stumbling blockes before the blind, and giue euill counsell for their owne aduantage.

6 Secondly, by these words wee gather to whome widowes belong, their husbands being dead, namely, to *their owne mothers house*: that is, to their patents: if the parents of their husbands will not prouide for them. Therefore it is that the Lord commanded, if the daughter of a Priest were a widdow, and returned to her Fathers house, hauing no children, she might eate of the peace-offerings of the childre of Israel. And Paul giueth charge to the godly in his time, that if any of their kindred were a widow, of their owne costs they should prouide for her, & not charge the church: This is a profitable doctrine both for Parents and children: for parents that they be carefull to bestow their children in godly mariages, where they may be well prouided for, neither must they then cast them off, but if neede be, receiue them to their owne families again: for children, seeing the Lord doth thus commend their welfare, & careth for their widow-head as well as their virginity, that they cast not themselues away vpon euery one they can loue, without the consent of their parents, whereby they impouerish their friends, vndoe themselues, and bring a wofull curse vpon their innocent posterity. Thirdly and lastly, by this counsel of *Nami* we gather, that if the father bee dead, wee owe the same duty to our mother which is aliue, for she saith to her own mothers house. And *Salomen* saith, it is foolishnes



nes or wickednes to despise ones mother: the Lord curseth him in the law, that despiseth or curseth his mother as well as his father. In the 5. commandment, he commandeth to honor the mother equally, or as well as the father. Many thinke they may be more bold with their mothers, because they are more tender ouer them, than with their fathers: but the godly must know, that vpon paine of Gods heauy curse, they must follow the counsell of their mothers with *Iacob*, as well as the aduise of their fathers with *Esau*. And the Lord doth often cloath the weaker vellell with more honour, that thereby we might learn to continue our obedience to our parents.

7 *The Lord shew*. In these words the general blessing or praier is contained, which *Naomi* maketh for her two daughters,, wher she praieth to God for his fauor vpon them as they shewed fauour to her, and to their dead husbands, as if she should say, I with no more acceptable blessing vpon you, then you haue done to others.

Where we briefly note, that our duties which we discharge to parents or husbands, are as pledges before the Lord to do good vnto vs. This maketh him dellight to powre his blessings vpon vs, when he seeth we dutifully walke in his presence, and it prouoketh those to whom we offer this obedience, to powre out their praiers for vs into the eares of the almighty: euen so the neglect of our duties, the contempt of our parents, and the disobedience of our superiors procureth both the curse of God & them, not only in this life, but also in the life to come. This was euer obserued like the *Talion* law, that goodnesse procureth goodnesse, and euill begetteth euill, like as birds breed birds, and fishes fishes: for hee that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reape corruption, but hee that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reape life euerlasting. Be not deceiued my beloved, such as you sow, such shall you reape. *Ahab* did spill the blood of *Naboth*, therefore the dogs did eate both his and *Iezabels*, for such measure as wee meat to other, shall bee measured to vs againe: for receiuing a Prophet, wee shall haue a Prophets reward, for hurting  
a Prophet

Deut. 21. 16.

Gen. 27. 13.



a Prophet, we shall haue the Lords displeasure: *Phocas* the greatest benefactor to the Pope, slew his Master *Mauritius*: the like fell vpon him by *Heraclius*, who burned him aliue, and tooke away his Empire: so let all wicked men expect for cruelty, cruelty: for hatred, malice: for wrong, extortion: for earthly euill, spirituall misery. But let the righteous goe on in goodnes, for not onely the losse of their houses, lands and reuenues shall be recompensed, but euen a cup of cold water shall be rewarded.

3 *The Lord*. These words are her speciall prayer for her daughters marriage, and are thus in effect, I can pray for no greater worldly blessing vpon you thā this, that either of you being young women, may find quiet and louing husbands, and be made ioyfull mothers of many children.

Where we first of all note, that as parents are bound by the law of nature to prouide mariages for their children, so they are willed by the law of God, to pray for their prosperous estate, both before, and also after they be married. And truly this neuer sinketh into the head of carnall parents, who are able to doe more with their purses then with their prayers, who wish extremities to their children, minding only a wealthy and not a quiet life. Oh how are we beholding to such ignorant parents, who onely take care for vs, that we might be lifted higher, when they prouide not for vs against the stormie tempests of vnquiet liues, and the dangerous downefalls of worldly confusion? Let them neuer think that their wishes are prayers, when they say, I would God my sonne were married to such a mans daughter, or my daughter to such a mans sonne. This is all they aime at, simple and bare wealthy marriages, neuer minding or praying for God his blessing vpon them.

9 Secondly, by this prayer of *Naomi*, wee note the duty of husbands towards their wiues, which is, that they should prepare rest for them: their minds being troubled, they should pacifie them with counsell: their bodies diseased, they should comfort them with their loue

loue: their estate endangered, they should deliuer them with carefulnesse: and finally, they should loue their wiues as their owne soules.

The Prophet *David* compareth a wife to a vine, which if it be not propped vp with a stay by the hand of the Gardener, what shall it doe but wallow on the ground, and remaine fruitlesse? Euen so the best wiues if they bee not carefully maintained by the kindnesse of their husbands, their sorrowfull liues will increase their curse, yea and destroy the fruit of their owne bodies.

The Apostle wisheth husbands to loue their wiues, as Christ loued his Church, which is not onely mindful to deliuer it out of present danger, but also hath redeemed it from the curse of eternall damnation: so the husbands duties are to prouide for the temporall welfare of their wiues bodies, and especially for the euerglasting saluation of their soules: that they twain which in this life haue had corporall society, in the life to come might enioy eternall felicity. Now this condemneth the carnall behauiour of wretched husbands, who vse their wiues as their seruants, & not as themselues, who deale with them as men doe with nuts, first, they reach and trauell for them, and hauing gotten them, they take out the kernell, but they tread the shell vnder their feet: so they hauing gotten the wealth, the bewty, the health and young yeares of their wiues, despise their gray haire, which are their greatest credite, as the shells wherein the kernell was, giuing them ouer in their weakest dayes, wherein they want greatest comfort. Is this the rest you prouide for your wiues, to cause them to weare their bodies with weary trauels, to consume their minds with dayly griefe, to procure their paines by bearing of children, and to lay the greatest burthens vpon the smallest beasts, for so some most wretchedly tearme them: Oh looke vnto it, this measure will the Lord measure to you againe, yee vnnaturall husbands which follow your pleasures, and pastimes abroad, and neglect your profites, and sorrowfull wiues at home, to flie ouer the seas with vnnecef-

*Psa. 128. 3.*

*Eph. 5. 25*

1.Pet.3.7.

vnecessary iourneyes, to frequent the company of suspected women, to follow the counsell of vaine persons, spending their patrimonie, and bringing themselves, their wiues and posterity to wofull misery. Is this to dwell with your wiues like men of knowledge? Is this to giue honour vnto them as the weaker vessels? Is this to account them the heires of the same grace? and finally, is this to see their praier be not interrupted? nay rather, there are many thousand husbands which neuer either could or would pray with their wiues, that thinke neither vpon heauen nor hel, and haue no knowledge of their duties towards God or their neighbors, (much lesse to their wiues) then brute beasts, carnal infidels, prophane Atheists, the murderers of themselves, and of their owne posterity. Oh fearefull danger that hāgeth ouer your heads, whom neither the laws of God can compell to learn their duties, or men instruct them to amend their liues. But you my beloued, who are guiltlesse in this point, are the blessed of the Lord, and forsake not your carefulnesse already begun, that you loose not your reward.

10 Thirdly, by this prayer wee obserue the duties of wiues or women in families, namely that they should be peaceable themselves, for if they seeke peace, they must ensue peace, and if their ioy consist in the quietnes of the family, they must be carefull they break not the vnity. If like *Ismael* their hands be against all, the hands of all will be against them, if they will be the louing turtles, they must not be the chattering pies, if they be the vines, their fruit must be grapes, and out of grapes commeth wine, and wine reioiceth the heart of man, so women must reioyce their husbands and families. Some women wil neuer bee at rest till they beare rule, & wil say, their husbands loue them not, except for their sakes they wil displace their seruants, fall out with their neighbours, enuy their friends, and in all things follow their minds: such men giue not peace to their wiues, but swords to slay themselves withall. The harkning ouermuch to womens counsell, old *Adam* and wee  
his,

his posterity may for euer lament, yet godly men may heare their godly wiues, remembring alway themselves to be the head, and the choice to rest in them, eyther to like or dislike their counsell.

11 *And they answered.* This is the answer of these women to the counsell, and blessing of their mother in law, wherein they refuse to returne, and promise to goe with her to her own people, as if they shold say, we are rather bound vnto thee than to our own mothers; and for thy sake whose godly conuersatio we know, are we drawn in loue with the whole people: so that in these words they testifie their louing affectio to their mother, their desire to be with her among her people, & the cause vndoubtedly to be her godly & wise conuersatio with her in the land of *Moab*: where we note the duty of all the faithfull, which is, so to walk that other by their good example may be drawn to loue the truth: for surely these women liked wel of the religio of *Naomi*, but much better of her conuersation, as a thing they better vnderstood than the other: for this point the Apostle warneth that we walk in wisdom, because of them that are without. And *Peter* saith to the dispersed lewes of his time, that they must haue a good conuersation among the Gentiles, inso much as their enemies might haue no occasio to speak against them. And our Sauior saith, *Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, & glorifie your father which is in heauen.* For as the vnbeleeuing husband may be won by the godly behauiour of the beleeuing wife, so many infidels & carnall persons are sooner drawn to the Lord by the works which they see, then by the words which they heare. Seeing, this is plaine by the word of God, where shal I begin to complaine of this our unhappy age, wherein are but few talkers of God his word, but much fewer walkers, when the Gospell of Christ is made the cloake of wickednes? Oh how grievously is the Church of God rent in sunder by daily disquietnes, inso much as there is no peace among vs: as the infidels & papists say of vs, as old *Emor* said of *Jacob* & his family: These men are men of peace, therefore let

Col. 4. 5.

1. Pet. 1. 12

Luc. 8. 16

Gen. 34. 31

Mat. 23.

Luk. 13. 26.

27

1 Cor. 1. 39.

Iob. 13. 30.

let vs bee circumcised with them : what peace is there left in the church of God? Truly wee are like vnto a tree, wee agree all in the body of religion, but as the branches spread themselues an hundred wayes, so in our indifferentest points of Religion there is little or no vnity. There is no care had of giuing offences vnto the weake, there is no conscience to stay the slander of the Gospell. Oh how grieuous is it, that many now a dayes will defend their dissimulation, by saying. Take heed to our words, and not to our deeds : liue as wee say and not as wee doe, making Christianity like the profession of Pharisees, which say and doe not: Esteeming of Religion like the occupation of a Smith, wherein one is discharged by blowing, and another by beating : so these thinke, if they can blow out any good words, and bee able to crie, the Gospell, the Gospell, the Preachers, the Preachers, and to say vnto Christ. Thou hast prophesied in our streetes, and wee haue eaten in thy presence, they are right good Christians : but the Lord shall say vnto them : Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I know you not. Yet let vs be warned by the examples of the godly, the exhortations of the scripture, and the motions of God his spirit in our hearts, that seeing Christ is our wisdom, let vs walke in wisdom, or else we dwell not in Christ, seeing Christ is our light, let vs shine forth in holy conuersation, and seeing the world is our enemy, which dayly lyeth in wait to discredit our profession, let vs adorn the Gospell wee professe: either make the tree good, and fruit good, or the tree euill, and the fruit euill, cast away this counterfeit holines, which is double iniquity, let vs confesse with the mouth vnto saluation, belieue in the heart to iustification, and practise in life vnto sanctification, and let euery one that calleth on the name of the Lord depart from iniquity. Thus much for the Daughters answer. Now to the mothers reply in the next verse.

12 But Naomi. In this verse and in the two next following, Naomi confirmeth her counsell by forcible reasons



reasons taken from their second marriages, and studying more for their good than her owne. The first reason is, that she hath no moe sonnes eyther borne or vnborne to be their husbands: for by the law one brother being dead without issue, the next was to marry his wife, and to raise vp seed to his brother. They knew shee had no moe children already borne, and shee proueth that shee is out of hope to haue any more, by her owne age, shee is too old to marry, and therefore to beare children: so that the force of this reason is to perswade them to goe backe againe, that they might marry at home, for shee knew not how to bestow them in her owne country. In the which words, thus taking a reason from their marriage, she noteth the duty of younger widdowes and women, which is to marry, and to beare moe children, and in her self perswading them vnto it, shee noteth the duty of godly parents which is to deale priuately with them for the publike commodity. For the Apostle *Paul* willeth the selfe same thing, that thy younger widdowes marrie and bring forth mo children, as the most acceptable condition for their fruitfull dayes, & a necessary duty for replenishing the Church. But these persons must not so marry for wantonnes, as if they minded nothing but procreation of children, but they must ioyne with it all Christian obedience to the aduise of their husbands: secondly, they must bee carefull to bring vp their children in the feare and nurture of the Lord. Thirdly, this must be the end of their marriage and child-birth, that they may the more deuoutely giue themselves to the worship of God, and by their children to increase the number of the faithfull: for it is better to bee barren then to bring forth children of the diuel, which they do that mind nothing lesse then their carefull education, and christian instruction, yea, it is more excellent to bee a religious widdow, then a prophane married wife. But some will say, that second marriages are not lawfull at all, because *Paul* willeth that such widdowes should not be chosen into the number of church-seruants: and the

1.Tim. 5.14

1.Tim. 5.1.  
Luc. 2.36.



1. Tim. 5. 1

Luc. 2. 36.

1. Cor. 7. 27.

Rom. 7. 2.

Non certum

the holy Ghost giueth such commendation of *Anna*, because shee neuer married, though shee were left a widdow very yong: moreouer, the counsell of *Paul* is, that if they bee losed from husbands or wiues, they should not seeke to bee ioyned vnto them. Vnto all which I answere with the same *Paul*, that a woman, so soone as shee is loosed from her husband, or so soone as her husband is dead, she is at libertie to marie with whom she will, only in the Lord. *Anna* is commended more for her Religion, then her widdowhood. And *Paul* his counsell is to them that could forbear, in those daies of persecution.

13 But to come to *Naomi*, shee saith, shee is too old to marrie, therefore it seemeth, though second marriages bee good for young Women, yet they are not lawfull for the old. To this I answere, her meaning is not that it is simply vnlawfull for her to marrie, but that it should not profit her in regard of child-bearing: men desire yong and fruitfull women, not old & barren, and her purpose is to perswade her daughters, that shee neither had, nor could haue any more children for them, therefore in the next Verse she addeth: *If I hoped, or if I were this night with an husband*. But in my iudgement, I see no reasonable cause why old women (especially) should marrie, howsoeuer others may be contrarie minded: my reasons are these: First, I reade it not practised by any body in the Scripture, I meane such old women as in their owne consciences are perswaded they are past child-bearing. Secondly, they breake the greatest consideration in marriage: they vndertake it for lust, and not for children, for marriage was not ordained for the lust of the mind, but the necessitie of the bodie, to withdraw it from sin. Now their withered bodies cannot accomplish the desire of their carnall minds. Thirdly, it bringeth great inconuenience with it: if they marie with a yong man, there is no equalitie, as anon shall be proued, if with old men like themselues, what comfort can they minister vnto them? Lastly, such marriages are more for wealth,

wealth, then women, or necessitie. Yet this is but my poore iudgment, if any doubt of it, let them examine my reasons, if they be waightie, let them receiue them; if light, amend them. If any say they marrie for cōfort, as they can say nothing else, I demand why poore women haue not this comfort as well as the rich. I see seldom any poore widowes married, but the wealthy, as soone as either honesty or modestie will suffer them: Againe, comfort is no sufficient cause for marriage, because it may be had without marriage, but children can not. It is the dutie of married folks, with their mutuall loue to cōfort one another, but not a cause that ought to constraîne to marriage. The *Eunuch* wanteth comfort, yet who thinketh such a person fit for marriage: a continent person, which as Christ saith, hath made himselfe chaste for the Kingdome of God, wanteth comfort, yet he should sinne grievously if hee married for comfort: let lawfull things be ioyned with expedient, and I thinke old women will neuer marrie.

*Yea if I had.* This is the second reason wherewith the perswadeth her Daughters to turn back againe, namely, grant she had Sons new borne, yet it were too long for them to tarie till they were growne vp, and fit for marriage, yea, then they would be past children, also, they should lose the season of their youth, & so should reap no haruest of their daies: there would be no agreement in yeares between them, when they should be as a withered stubbe, and the yong men as green Oliues. Where wee note, that by the iudgement of this godly *Naomi*, there must be an agreement of yeares between the parties that shall be married, for she saith, would ye be deferred for them, from taking any husbands? nay, my Daughters: by the which words she signifieth, that it would bee no fit marriage, that one should bee so old, and the other so yong. The Lord created *Adam* and *Hauab* in one day, not only that marriage should not be deferred too long, but also because their Age should be alike, but if any be the elder, let it be the man. In the planting of Gardens, they get the yongest imps;

Maſter H.  
Smith.

for the continuance and equalitie of the fruit: they will not digge vp an old tree, and plant him in an Orchard of tender imps, euen ſo muſt it bee in marriage, for the matrimonie of old-men and yong women, is like *Iosephs* party-coloured coat, which cauſed iealouſie in his brethren, for, as that was a ſigne of loue in his father, ſo this is a token of fondneſſe in a husband. But moſt vnſeemely is the marriage of yong men and old women, which a godly Preacher in our daies compared to the grafting of a yong head vpon an old paire of ſhoulders: and I may compare it to the mixture of oile and water, the which are quite againſt the nature of all medicines. And euen the brute beaſts, and the birds, as we reade of the Turtles, the Harts, and the Elephants, condemne herein the folly of mankinde, which from their youth chooſe their Mate, and being dead, reſuſe another, fearing inequalitie of age and nature. But theſe kinde of matches, are neither begunne in the Lord, continued in nature, or ſatiſſie the deſire of both parties, but breake out into impatient iealouſie of filthy adulterie, thinking euery day a yeare till the eldeſt partie be dead. Oh vnſeemely and vnfriendly behauiour towards thoſe to whom they haue bound themſelues, to loue and liue together, being the only cauſe of the breach of fidelitie, curſed diſcord, mutuall enuie, and euerlaſting miſerie.

Gen. 24.1.

Exod. 2. 21.

15 Secondly, by this we note, that it is the dutie of Parents in time to prouide for their children, if they be willing to it, ſome godly and fit marriage. So did *Abraham* for *Iſaac* his Sonne, ſo did *Iſaac* and *Rebecca* for *Iacob* their Sonne, ſo did *Iethro* for his daughter *Zipporah*. The neglect of this dutie in Parents, is the cauſe that ſo many children match contrarie to their mindes, euen to their owne vndoing. And then they crie out towne and countrie, My ſonne or my daughter hath married againſt my mind, when as themſelues are in the only fault, then they puniſh them by keeping away their portion: ſo, as before by their negligence they ſought their diſhoneſty, now by their willfulneſſe,

fulnesse, they bring them to perpetuall beggerie. I defend not the rash and headlong mariages against Parents consents, especially where godly Parents are: and surely I fear there are but few in Englād that euer married so, but they procured the curse on themselues, & haue often (although too late) repented their wilful & vngodly marriage. But yet beloued, be warned; if you desire the discharge of your owne consciences, or the safegard of your children, deale like parents with them and they will performe like children to you: the Lord punisheth your negligēce with their disobedience: you sin first, and they follow your steps, forgieue them their offence, and receiue them to fauor again, and the Lord will likewise pardon your transgression, and blesse your posteritie with more dutifull obedience to you.

16 *But this.* Now when thee had perswaded her Daughters to returne, least they should thinke she careth not for them; and was willing to be rid of their company, as those that were troublesome and burdennous vnto her, she addeth this clause in the end of this Verse: Wherein she testifieth her care for them, & her patience in the Lord: her care for them when she saith: It grieueth me much more for your sake than for mine owne: the death of my husband & losse of my children grieue mee, but not so much as this, that now either I must depart from you, or else with your company endanger your saietie. I could not but sorow for the dead, yet I am more griued for you poore destitute Widowes: I haue lost their cōpanie for a while, till I meet them againe in God his kingdom, but now we depart, I to the Lords people, and you to Infidels, and we shall be separated for euer. Would God that I could so promise you prosperity with me, that so you might receiue the peace of your soules. Thus & such like she vttereth in these words for her owne excuse, and their comfort.

Where we are first giuen to vnderstand, how hardy true friendship is separated, yea though some parties are indangered thereby. *Naomi* would haue her daughters depart, they weep at it, and she is sorrowfull: in-

much as either partie striueth who shall receiue the worst. The mother counselleth their good, & the daughters promise hers: shee would haue them returne and liue at rest in the armes of some louing husband, but they had rather trauell than she should goe alone. And this telleth vs that true friendship is not to receiue good of other, but to doe good vnto other. Choose thy friend, that when he is in heauinesse thou maist comfort him, when he is hungrie thou maiest feede him, when he is cast downe, thou maiest raise him vp: and finally when he wanteth, make thou a supply. This is a godly friendship, like *Ionathans* and *Dauids*. If any choole friends for other respects, their friendship is carnall, and not spirituall, momentanie and not euerlasting, like the standing Pooles which drie vp in Sommer, not like the running streames which indure continually.

17. Secondly, by this we note that one miserie cometh not alone, for warres cause death, dearth, enuie, and robberies: sicknesse bringeth paine to the parties, and sorrow to their friends, euen so death doth not only bring sorrow for the dead, but griefe for the liuing, as *Naomi* saith, it grieues me much more for your sakes. There is none that die but some shal want them, many friends comfortlesse, many children harborlesse, many seruants masterlesse, and many creditors monylesse by the death of men. I will say nothing, that the godly may and ought to mourne for their friends that are dead, as *Abraham* for *Sara*, *Iacob* for *Rabel*, the *Iebusites* for *Saul*, *Mary* and *Martha* for *Lazarus*: and the Apostle willetth vs to mourn, but with this clause, *not as me without hope*. Therefore the vse of this doctrine is, with patient and brotherly loue to beare with the weaknesse of them, which seeme in our conceits to weepe more for their husbands & wiues, children & friends, then wee thinke needfull. It is their weakenesse, and what know wee, if the like burthen were on our backs that we should not be pressed down vnder it like them? Let vs therefore consider with our selues least we also be tempted, and helpe them with brotherly kindnesse,

not

1. Theff. 4.

13.



not increase with daily murmurings: that which is to day their sinne, to morrow may be our wickednes.

18 *But the hand.* In those words she gathereth patience for the remedy of her owne griefe, and sheweth howsoever shee is afflicted, yet she is not ignorant, that as the showers come from the cloudes, so her afflictions from the Lord: his hand that wrought her felicity, hath also brought her to misery, her ease is her patience, her weakenes is her sorrow, her comfort, that God with whom is mercy hath wounded her heart.

The hand of the Lord is taken in the Scriptures many waies, but generally it signifieth the meanes whereby he accomplisheth his counsell, and is referred either to his mercy and fauour, as when it is said, the hand of the Lord was with *Iohn Baptist*, or else to his iudgements, punishment, or chastisement: so the hand of the Lord was against the Israelites, *when they had forsaken him and served Baalim*. So when the Arke of God was in the house of *Dagon*, the god or idoll of the *Philistines*, the Lord ouerthrew their god, cut off his hands and head, and smote the Priests with Emrods, when they confessed the hand of God to be sore against them: so in this place it is taken for the chastisement or correction vpon *Naomi*. Our of the which we note many profitable doctrines.

First, that all our afflictions come from the Lord, that he might chastise his owne, and confound the vngodly. Read but the 34, and 36. Chapters of *Iob*, most excellently entreating of this matter, wherein is shewed that neither the godly escape, nor the wicked goe scotfree. This is the confession of *Moses*, to terrisie the Israelites, of *Iosuah*, to keepe them in obedience, and of *Dauid*, a mā more exercised in trouble, the all the world beside. This must we account with our selues in al our miseries we are robbed by theeeues, spoiled by murderers, struck by bruit beasts, reproched by slanderers, euill entreated by the world, hurt by our enemies, sustain the losse of our goods, the danger of our health, and are oppressed with sicknes, surely, in all these things say. The

*Iud. 2. 15.*

*I. Sam. 5. 7.*

*Deu. 31. 18.*

*Ios. 14. 20*

*Pf. 119. 71.*



Lord gaue, and the Lord hath taken away, euen as it hath pleased the Lord, so commeth things to passe. But men will say, we know it well enough already, and we confesse it. And doe you know and confesse, and will you not practise? A man being sick, at the beginning neuer thinketh on the Lord, but posseth to the Physitian for counsell, without crauing the forgiuenes of his sinnes, the cause of his sicknes: yet you say, God hath sent it, and laid it vpon vs, as if the Lord sendeth sicknesse to helpe the Physitian to money, for with him you agree for his paines and cunning, but with the Lord you agree not for your owne paines which you endure. But you will say, we find ease by medicines, & our sicknesse is abated. I answer, so the Lord suffreth witches and coniurers, to tel them that come vnto the things they desire, yet you will not say they are guiltlesse. I speake nothing against the excellent and commendable profession of Physick, but rather for the commendation of it, seeing God so accepteth it, as that thereby he seemeth to salue vp the sinnes of many, doing away their paines, and also to giue them longer time of repentance. But this I wish both in this, and in all other miseries of mankind: that first wee purge our consciences from notorious crimes, and then the Lord will stay our hands from striking, our hearts from wauering, our goods from wasting, our bodies from pining, and our soules from euerlasting dying.

19 Secondly, by this we note, whence it commeth, that the godly are so patient in all their tribulations: euen from this consideration, that the Lords hand afflicteth them. This is worthy to be noted, in the example of *Dauid*, when *Shemei* cursed him: *Abisai* standing by, wisheth *Dauid* to punish him: but *Dauid* answereth him, *what haue I to doe with you yee sonnes of Zeruiab?* hee curseth, because the Lord hath bidden him to curse me: as if he had said, I may punish the Lord as well as *Shemei*. The very like did *Iob* answer his wife, when she would haue him curse God and die. Thou speakest like a foolish woman, what? shall wee receiue good at the

*Mitigat  
vim doloris  
considerata  
aegritas fe-  
rientis.*

2. Sam. 16.  
10. 11. 12.

*Iob. 2. 10.*

the hands of God, and not euill? as if he had said, wee are bound to receiue euill at the hand of God, as well as good, & if wee receiue the one with blessing, let vs not curse him for the other. This was it that made the *Apostles* to reioyce, that they were accounted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ: and this must sinke into our ignorant and rebellious hearts, that wee may learne at the first to humble our selues, lest as wee now suffer for sinne, so anon we be punished for impatience. The patient abiding of the righteous, auailerh much in the sight of the Lord: men thinke they bee forgotten if they be a little afflicted; and crie out like desperate persons, Lord, Lord, but they neuer pray for patience, but all for deliuerance. Oh how excellenr is this example of *Naomi*, which being in many miseries in a strange country, hauing buried husband and sonnes, being now to depart from her acquaintance, to take a tedious iourney into her owne country, poore, weary, and desolate, yet, all her words are these: The hand of the Lord is gone out against me, as if shee had saide he that gaue them tooke them, and he that tooke them left me patience. Thus must we stay our minds on the worke of the Lord, as the *Arke* was stayed by the *Priests* in the middest of the riuer *Jordan*, which made the waters to flie backe, till all the children of *Israel* were passed thorow: euen so the floudes of great troubles shall not ouerthrow vs, if we stay our minds on the hand of the Lord, and safely escape the dangerous destruction of worldly affliction.

20 *Then they lift.* Now commeth the effect of the communication, wherein is shewed how sorrowful y these daughters tooke it, and yet diuersly minded: for *Horpah* notwithstanding her gentle proffers to her mother in law, her bitter teares, and pittifull lamenting, yet shee taketh her leaue with a sweet kisse, and returneth backe to her idolatrous friends. *Naomi* vsed no perswasions but worldly reasons taken from mariage to perswade them both, shee seeth her sister remain constant, and shee that euen now, for the loue of people,

Ait. 5. 41.

Jo 3. 16.

17.

and mother in law would goe as farre as the farthest, now for the cogitation of a heathen husband, forsake th both God, people, mother, and sister Who would haue thought that *Horpah* which bid her friends farewell, her country adew, her kindred forsakē, and idolatry abhorred, would thus cowardly (as I may tearme it) she backe againe in hope of a husband? But yet wee see thee doth, and out of her example wee may note many things.

First, that the world and carnall reasons are feareful hinderances to vs in religion. We see this woman, how doth she fall away from God his people, all the church that she knew, her mother and sister? Wee know how many being sent for to the great mans Supper, which is, the Lord, they excused their absence, one for his farme, another for his oxen, another for his wife, as *Horpah* doeth for her husband: What shall I say? The loue of the world is the hatred of God: and *Iohn* sayeth, *Loue not the world, nor the things of the world. for hee that loueth the world, the loue of the Father is not in him.* And *Christ* sayeth, *Whosoever commeth to mee, and hateth not Father and mother, and wife and children, is not worthy of mee.* Where are now our Naturals, that would be professors, but their friends will not let them, they would bee Christians, but their Wiues will not agree to them: this yeare they will bee worldlings, and the next yeare when they haue ouercome their businesse, if they haue any leysure they will heare the Word preached. Oh dangerous delayes of subtle sathan; studying by the world to draw men from God: they lie like sluggards: in winter it is too cold, in summer it is too hote to worke: so they in their youth, will bee religious when they are old; being in age, when they bee rich, being rich, they waxe harder and harder, and so continue till the day of their damnation.

21 Secondly, by this wee may gather how far an hypocrite or an infidell may goe in Religion. *Horpah* forsaketh her owne people for the loue of God his people,

*Mat. 22. 5*

*Iam. 4. 4.*

*Ioh. 2. 15.*

*Luk. 14. 26*

ple, shee weepeth and crieth, when it is but mentioned vnto her that shee would depart, shee trauelleth on the way towards the Country of God his people; and in this her iourney, for a few worldly reasons, she turneth backe againe, though as it may seeme with a bitter heart. Euen so hypocrites may forsake the world, and their friends, ioine themselues to God and his people, trauell and profire in religion towards the heauenlie *Ierusalem*, be ready to weepe with them that weepe, and lament with them that lament: and in any good action, set his foot as far forth as the best: yet some occasion giuen, eyther for profite or pleasure, feare or danger, sodainly turneth faile, and commeth to the world againe. Euen so saith our Sauour of the seede, that is lowne in the 2. and 3. ground, it taketh root, it springeth and groweth vp, but sodainely the heat of persecution ariseth, or offence taken at the doctrine, which is taught them, or the cares of this life & deceitfulnes of riches choake them. By this wee learne what to thinke of our soft hearted Christians, many among vs that will diligently heare, and wring out teares from their moistned brain at the hearing of God his iudgements thundered and threatned by the Preacher: yet being gone, wil make no conscience of oathes, carding, dicing, tabling, gaming for their neighbours money, going abroad on the saboth day to feasts, and being sharply reprobued for it, then farewell religion & profession also.

22 Thirdly, by this we gather what exceeding kindness an heathen, an atheist, or an infidel may shew to the that feare God: *Horpah* for the loue of godly *Naomi*, goeth with her on the way, weepeth & kisseth at their departure, so great loue did she beare to her mother in law, that had it not been for one thing, shee had gone thorough with her to her owne people. In like manner we reade about the yeare of Christ, 745. when the Mahometans did fearefully and cruelly punish all Christians. For one *Abbas* a prince of that faction forbade the Christians to preach, to build Churches, or to  
 looke

Mar. 4. 16

17

Ioh. 6. 66.

looke vpon the Crosse. And another called *Habdallas*, forbad all Christians to learn to write or read any kind of bookes and learning. Then the Christians of *Antiochia* requested of *Marnas* their Mahometan Prince, that they by his licence might haue a Bishoppe, who granted vnto them that worthy *Theophylact*, giuing expresse charge, that no man should molest or trouble the Bishoppe or the Christians: and yet this kindnes hee afforded them out of his pity, that could not find in his heart to become a Christian and turne to the Lord. So we may see many among vs speake well of Religion, yet they will not goe so farre as *Bethlehem* for it, that is, they will wish they had a Preacher, yet they will hardly, either on the Sabbath day or weeke day, stirre one foot from their owne place, to heare a Sermon, so cold is their deuotion: but if they giue a poore man a meale of meat, or lend him a little money at his need, or receiue a Preacher for a night, then hee is the onely man in the Country. But oh Lord open their eyes, that they may see their curtesie is but light, in regard of their duty: if for their brethren they would die, it were but their duty, how little is it then that they giue them meat? but they would know of vs what is the way to bee saued? I answere, so would the yong man in the Gospel, yet when Christ told him, he would not doe it, but went away sorrowing: euen so these men may outwardly and inwardly in some measure professe kindnesse and humility to bee instructed, but alas their profession is farre from true feeling of Christian religion.

Mat. 19. 38

13 Lastly, by this verse we note, that as *Horpab* & her companions are carnally minded, so *Ruth* and her fellowes are spiritually minded, though one bee ouerthrowne with worldly reasons, yet the other remaineth inuincible in her first pretended purpose. So that here is an image of a congregation, where all heare, and yet there is a difference of hearing in one and the same Company: one part vvith profite, another vvith disprofite, one to their health, another to their sicknesse,

to

to some the saueur of life vnto life, to other, the saueur of death vnto death. Yet blessed be God, that hath no earth so barren but it bringeth forth som fruit, no people so rude, but there are som sanctified persons among the, which wil not be drawn away til death: no battel so cruel, but some escape with life. If the Pharisies will not belieue in Christ, yet the poore people that know not the law will receiue him for the Messiah. Among the mockers at *Athens*, *Paul* receiued some fruit of his labours, and the Gospell was neuer preached in any Country but it gained some. This teacheth vs to follow the example of *Ruth*, and wee shall haue the reward of *Ruth*: sticke to the Lord, and to the faithfull, with purpose of heart; let not the vaine glittering pleasure of pleasant pastime or profite, draw vs from the hope of our euerlasting blessednesse. The time is but short wee haue to spend, the labour easie if we willingly endure it, the profite euerlasting if wee continue to the end. This is the victorie that ouercommeth the world, euen our faith: for to him that beleeueth are all things possible: Let vs therefore heare the word with diligence, that our faith may be strengthened, belieue with assurance that our soules may bee iustified, and stand fast in the triall of this world, that body and soule may bee crowned: for blessed are they that endure to the end. And thus much of this conference or communication, and the effect thereof. Now let vs giue thanks to God for that which hath been spoken.

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The end of the second Lecture.

The

*Act. 17. 34.*

*1. Ioh. 5. 4.*



## The third Lecture.

Ruth. Chap. 1. verse, 15. 16. 17.

- 15 *And Naomi said, behold thy sister in law is gone backe to her people, and to her gods, returne thou after thy sister in law.*
- 16 *And Ruth answered, entreate me not to leaue thee, nor to depart from thee, for whether thou goest I will go; and where thou dwellest I will dwell, thy people shall be: my people, and thy God my God.*
- 17 *Where thou dyest will I die, and there will I be buried, the Lord doe so vnto me, and more also, if ought but death depart thee and me.*



**I**N these words the holy Ghost declareth vnto vs the conference had betweene Naomi and Ruth, after the departure of Orpah, wherein Naomi ceaseth not thoroughly to trie and examine the minde of Ruth, for what cause shee would goe with her: the words containe in them two parts. The first is the perswasion of Naomi in the 15. verse, to make Ruth to returne by the example of her sister. The second is the answer of Ruth in the two next verses, consisting of two parts; the first is of the petition, shee maketh to her mother in these words, *Intreat me not to leaue thee, &c.* which shee amplifieth by the resolution of her mind in the next words. First, that for her life shee would dwell with her, and go with her. Secondly, for her profession, *her people and God should bee Naomies.* Thirdly, for her death, that she would die, and be buried with her. The last part of this answer of Ruth, is the confirmation of it by an oath in these words, *The Lord doe so vnto me, and more also, if ought but death depart thee and me.*

Behold

Behold thy sister is returned: Now Naomi goeth forward to deale with Ruth onely, for the Castle may seem almost won, where one halfe of the Souldiers are overcome; the vnity betweene these two sisters being broke, and *Horpah* being departed, what was poore Ruth able to doe alone? surely, this was a greater discouragement vnto her then any shee had yet, namely, that her sister being departed, she should lay before her her sisters example, to draw her likewise to fall. And truly thus the spirit of God dealeth most times with those that labour to come vnto him, setting some in the way like the Disciples which forbad yong children to come vnto Christ, and as the prease of the people kept the poore man diseased of the palse from coming vnto our Sauour: euen so many scandals, stumbling blocks, lettes, interruptions and hinderances come between the godly and Christ, as did betweene Naomi and Ruth.

But here we note that the examples of our kindred, and specially of those that seemed any thing in Religion, are dangerous arguments to draw vs from Christ. Wee see in this place, Naomi taketh example of one vngodly sister to draw away the other, which when our Sauour foresaw, hee gaue this commandement, that for his sake we must forsake father and mother, brother and sister, wife & children, or else we are not worthy of him. And in another place, one desiring of him but a little space to bury his father, hee said vnto him, *Let the dead bury the dead.* This is a very profitable doctrine for these dayes, wherein men are thus discouraged from Religion for feare of their friends, for now Sathan stirreth vp one brother against another, to hinder the from hearing the sauing word of God, now they crie out against vs, Are you wiser than your forefathers? hath not all thy friends before thee beleueed on this wise? and wilt thou be singular? And surely beloued we know it is the greatest argumēt, that popish Atheists haue, their ancestors, fathers and mothers, their masters and mistresses, haue misliked this preaching, and these

Mar. 10. 17

Mar. 2. 4.

Mat. 10. 34

35

Luk. 9. 60

Act. 17. 30.

Mat. 17. 6.

Job. 6. 68.

these new doctrines, wherein many repose their greatest felicity, & God send vs say they, to liue no worse then they did, and to die no more blessed then they. But would you so rather be followers of your popish and ignorant predecessors, then of the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, reuiled in his word? this is to build your selues vpon another foundation, which whē the fire commeth will vtterly consume it. But they say, are all our predecessors damned, which did as wee do? to whom I may well answere. How do you know that all your forefathers were of your mind? but wee are not in God his place to iudge and arraigne them: but say *with the Apostle*, the time of this ignorance did not God regard, but now he admonisheth all men euery where to repent, because he hath appointed a day to iudge the world in righteousness: so that if God seem not to regard it, why should wee stand vpon it? And seeing now the trumpet of the Gospell is sounded by the Lords Ministers, let vs not with *Mary* lament ouer the graues of the dead, but leauing them at their rest, trudge and trauell to the mount of the Lord, that of him wee may freely receiue that, which many kings & Prophets could neuer obtaine. Though *Moses* went not into the lād of *Canaan*, yet he saw it, so it may be the Lord let our Predecessors see light of the Gospell, though they could not enioy it: But as *Peter and Iohn* were with *Christ* when hee was transfigured, and saw his kingdom, yet could not enioy the continuall presence of his glory, but being warned of *Christ*, told it to no man: so many godly in time of darkenes, not onely saw, but embraced the truth, which it may be is forgotten of their gracelesse posterity. Let the parents eate the sower grapes, shall the childrens teeth be set on edge? if they made cakes to the host of heauen, shall we worshippinge the Sunne and the Moone? what discredit is it to a blind father, to haue a sonne well sighted? no more is it to idolaters, whose children are the appointed heires of the land of *Canaan*. Let vs abide with him that bath the words of eternall life, and the wealth of our parents is deare

deare vnto vs, yea many thousand times more deare is the health of our soules.

3 Secondly, by this we note, that to sticke by our friends, and to goe with them from the Lord, is to committ idolatry; for *Naomi* saith, *I by sister is gone to her people, and to her Gods*: as if she had said, indeed for kindred sake shee is gone backe, but it is vnto Idols and false gods. Yea and more also, vnto diuels: this is a worthy lesson for our naturals to learne, who will forsake Gospell, Church, Prayer and Preaching; some for the loue of their wiues, to keepe them company at home; when God calleth them in one congregation or other; some their idolatrous friends, which are notable Recusants, yet because they should thinke wel of them they will falsifie their faith to the Lord, and be vniust in his worke, that they may please them with their present Company: some are hindred by their profit, some by vnlawfull gaming, and many by bare idlenesse. Thus men make gods, some of their people, some of their wiues, some of their popish friends, some of their profite, some of their pleasures, and some of their idlenesse, and few or none are to be found, that are both able & willing to follow Christ when hee calleth them, as little *Zacheus* did, but euery one hath some excuse to keepe them from the Lords Supper, who shall neuer taste of his heauenly pleasures, seeing they mind earthly things, making their glory their shame, their belly their God, let their end be damnation. But oh my beloued, let vs be warned by the dangers of others, when *Peter* rebuked Christ, and bid him fauor himselfe, Christ rebuked him and called him *Sathan*: euen so when our dearest friends would haue vs be slacke in preaching, and fauour our bodies, come to the church seldome, and make no toile of it, agree with the most in religion, or rather in worldlings, and so shall wee haue fauour, aspire to the greatest promotions, for there is greatest profite, and finally take pleasure in vnlawfull things, let vs say, come behind vs *Sathan*: for it is not our friend, but our enemy *sathan*, that thus allureth vs with the

*Luc. 19. 5. 6*

*Mat. 16. 23*

1.Kin.II.2

the baite of pleasure, ease, and profit, that wee might hang on the hooke of perpetuall perdition. Then seeing we haue espied his pollicie, discouered his deceit, and tried the discōmodities that ensue his obedience, let vs as innocent children once burned, dread the Fire, and as *Iacob* said by his owne Sonnes *Simcon* and *Leui*, my soule come not into their habitation, so let vs say to our dearest friends; when their counsell and a good conscience cannot stand together, better breake the league of friendship betwene vs, then suffer the shipwrack of a precious and peaceable conscience. The wisest *Salomon* by hearkning to his wiues, disobeied the Lor<sup>d</sup>, and it cost him ten Tribes of his Kingdome: if such greene peeces be destroyed, what shall become of the rotten and seare: therefore if Angels from heauen must not be heard, much lesse Deuils from hell, drawing vs away from following the truth by the mouth of our dearest and nearest friends, though it were by our wiues that lie in our bosomes. Therefore let vs take vnto vs the whole armour of God, that wee may stand fast in the day of battell: better neuer runne, except wee obtaine the price, better neuer to haue knowne God or his Gospell, then now to fall away from him againe.

4 But *Ruth* said, *intreat mee not*. This is the first part of the answer of *Ruth*, to the Argument of her Mother, and it is her Petition, with the Reason of it: wherein she protesteth that it is better vnto her, not to bee intreated to depart, or once to haue it motioned, or mentioned to goe from her, for her resolution is, that neither the troubles or trauailes of life could separate her, neither the sorrowes of death or desolation of the graue, should depriue her of *Naomies* companie, for the saith, *Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried*. Out of which I obserue these things. First, how the godly behaue themselues in all trials and temptations; namely, that the very thoughts of departing from God and yeelding to sinne, are very gall and bitterness vnto them, insomuch as they say with *Ruth*,  
intreat



intreat me not to leaue thee, that is, neuer speake word to moue me from hearing God his word, to ouerthrow my faith, to turne mee to disobedience, to perish my conscience, to hinder my course, or to subuert my profession: a notable example hereof is in *Elisha*, who was intreated by *Eliab*, as here *Ruth* is by *Naomi*. First, hee had him tarry at *Gilgal*, til he went to *Bethel*: but *Elisha* said, as the Lord liueth, and as thy soule liueth, I will not leaue thee, nor depart from thee, the they went to *Bethel* together, & he bid him tarry there, for the Lord sedeth him to *Iericho*, but *Elisha* answered, as the Lord liueth, & as thy soule liueth, I will not leaue thee, nor depart fro thee, then they went to *Iericho*: *Eliab* bid him tarry there till he went to *Iericho*, and at *Iericho* *Eliab* bid him tarry there, till hee went to meet the Lord at *Jordan*, *Elisha* answered as he did before, for *Elisha* foresaw, that if he went not with *Eliab*, he should haue no benefit by his seruice: so if we abide not the obiections of our friends, the reproches of our enemies, the intisements of the world, & the perswasions of our own fathers & mothers, that are against vs in religiō, we shall lose all that wee haue done before, yea though they should say as *Rabsakeb* said to the men of *Ezechia*. The Lord hath sent vs to speake vnto you: but many will say, if prophane worldlings shuld discourage vs in religiō, & those that are open contēners shuld perswade vs fro it, then we could abide it, but it goeth nie vs when our own wiues or husbands, fathers or mothers, brethren & sisters, cōpanions & acquaintance shall trie vs so narrowly. But mark dearly beloued, thou art not alone; *Ruth* was thus handled by *Naomi* her deare mother in law, for whose sake she had departed from kindred and country, yet she trieth, molesteth & vexeth her; yet by the sauing grace of Gods assisting spirit, in the end she acquirith her selfe like a woman of strength in the Lords quarrel: for the Lord for our farther trial doth not onely proue vs in the least, but in the greatest afflictions. The Israelites cared but little for the Philistins, had they not had giants amōg thē; so the Lord will

2. King. 3.

I. 2. 3. 4. 5.

6. 7.

I. 2. 3. 6. 10.



2. Cor. 5. 20.

Mat. 8. 26.

Mat. 13. 26

Gal. 3. 1.

Luk. 12. 20.

bring crosses like armed men to dismay vs, that our valour and courage may be known. *Job* had first one heard taken away, and then another, in the end his children crushed to death, and then he was strangely visited in his owne body, but hauing onely one comfort in all the world left, his wife, she bid him curse God and die. But some say, we would willingly be professors, but the Preachers themselues tell vs how we must be mortified, and they call vs in their sermons wretches, and cursed creatures, these hard words hinder vs, if they spoke faire vnto vs, and cried mercy, mercy, we would with more diligence frequent their exercise: I answere *If they speake in Gods name, whose Ambassadors they are, can not yon beare it for his sake? they are not common persons in that place, but supply Christs roome: now Christ called his Disciples a faithlesse generation, hee called Peter Sathan, and a poor woman he called dogge when shee came vnto him. How did he deale with King Herod and with the Pharises, euery man knoweth, and are you better then these? Paul calleth the Galathians foolish, was it not to make them wise, whereby he might draw them to the truth, they had forsaken? euen so the Ministers of Christ must handle this rough world, setting it out by the titles, that by the name they may geffe of the nature. If the rich man promise peace to his soule in the multitude of his possession, shall not the Lord call him foole for his labour? If all the world follow the Prince that reigneth in the aire, shall not wee say that they be without God, and so without saluation? doth not the Lord chasten vs in this world, that wee should not bee condemned in the world to come? Are not seruants contented to beare hard words at the hands of their masters, because they receiue wages of them? euen so suffer God his Ministers to speake the worst they can of you: yet I assure you, there is no faithfull preacher that will speake so basely of the notablest wicked person, that is, but he speaketh and thinketh a thousand times more basely of himself. Beare with them therefore, you are children,*

and

and infants in Religion, not able to speake, they speake from the Lord in as humble manner as may be: knowing that the Lord resisteth the proud, and giueth grace to the humble and meeke: the prodigall son by speaking most vilely of himselfe, purchased his fathers fauour: Euen so these hard speeches of our selues, and other penitent sinners, are as faithfull messengers to reconcile vs vnto God.

6 Secondly by this wee note, how we must be enabled to encounter or resist the examples of others, that are laid against vs to draw vs from God, euen as *Ruth* doth in this place. *Naomi* telleth her, *Motpab* is turned away, and therefore thee must also. *Ruth* answereth, *where thou dwellest, I will dwell*: as if shee had said, if thou turne backe, I will turne backe also, but I know thy constancy is such, as thou wilt neuer yeeld, therefore all the examples of my slippery sister, and feareful fal-ayes in the world shalke neuer moue me: it is thy constancy that I looke vpon, and nothing else, which is as a safe ship for me to saile in through the waues of my vnstedfast mind: so that by this you perceiue, how she opposeth the stedfastnesse of her mother against the backsliding of her sister, depending vpon the surest hold, not vpon a broken staffe. Euen so must we against the examples of vngodly ruffians see the examples of sober minded. Match the world and Christ together, what shall the world get: if it say, be ignorant, the other saith, if the Gospell bee hid, it is to them that bee lost: if it say, follow the wayes of thy owne heart, the other saith, for this thou shalt come to iudgement: if the world say be couetous, and enrich thy selfe by gaming, cosening, carding, dicing, buying and selling, the other saith, such shall not inherite Gods kingdome: if the world say, seeke honour, the Church saith, it is vanity: if it say, esteeme best of thy selfe, the other saith, thinke better of another, if it with thee prosperity, the church saith, rather suffer aduersity with Gods children then to enioy the pleasures of sin for a season. So the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the

1. Pet. 5. 5.

Luc. 16. 13.

19.

1. Pet. 3. 6.

Iam. 5. 10

1. Cor. 10.

6. 7. 8.

Mat. 25. 1

22

flesh: if thou be tempted to infidelity, remember *Abraham* that beleueed in hope, vnder hope, and beyond hope, if to incontinency, remember *Ioseph* the mirror of chastity, if to impatiency, thinke vpon *Iob*, if to vniust dealing, remember *Jacob*: if to idlenesse thinke on the *Pismire*, if to drunkennes, remember what *Dauid* did with the water of the well of *Bethlehem*. This is vsual in the scripture to exhort by examples. *Peter* wisheth godly women to look vpon *Sara* her obedience, *Iames* willett the poore in his dayes to take the Prophets for an example of patience. *Paul* exhorteth the *Corinthians* to liberality, by the example of the *Macedonians*: euen so on the contrary, threatnings are denounced by the example of others, as we may often read in the Gospell. The Lord saith, the *Queen of Sheba* shal rise in iudgement against the nation of the *Iews*, which came to heare the wisdom of *Salomon*: likewise he prouoketh them by the exāple of the *Publicans* & harlots, telling them they shalbe preferred in the kingdom of God, and thinke there is none so simple, but they know they ought rather to follow the wise, then the foolish *Virgins*. But some will say, now the world is altogether corrupted, and the most part is the worst part, therefore they must needs follow their maners & be defiled. To whom I answer, if thou wert in a litle barke vpon the greatest sea, & sawest a thousand mighty waues about thee like huge mountains, wouldst thou forsake thy litle barke which is alone, and leape into the middest among the waues, because they are many, so thou shouldest worke thy own destruction: euen so, wilt thou forsake the maners, life & company of a few godly persons, with whom is safety, to wallow in the millions of worldly men, with whom is no peace, but is like the raging sea that cannot rest? shalt not thou be tossed with them, I will not say troubled, but euerlastingly confounded? I giānt: wee should liue by precept, and not by exāple, but seeing we must needs see the Gospell before we beleue it, let vs look on the liues of the purest, & fewest among vs, and ioine our selues to them, as *Noah* to his *Arke*, that the

the water-floods of euerlasting destructiō ouerwhelme vs nor in eternall damnation: For (saith *Salomon*) *hee that forsaketh the law praiseth the wicked, but hee that keepeth it resisteth them.*

*Prou. 18.4.*

7 *Thy God.* By these words it may seeme that *Ruth* is not so well grounded in the knowledge of God, as she ought to be, in that shee dependeth vpon her mother, in saying, thy God is my God, as if she had said, if thou worshipp the true God, so will I, if thou be an Idolater so wil I, if thou turn backward, so wil I, if thou goe forward, so will I. But I take it far otherwise, that these words proceed from a heart fully grounded vpon the truth: as if shee had said, I know *Naomi*, thou wilt neuer worshipping any Gods but the true God, thou art constant in that which thy selfe hast taught mee, I remaine stedfast in that which I learned of thee, and therefore I can neuer forsake thee. The which interpretation is confirmed by the words that follow, *Thy people, my people*: who were *Naomies* people, but the Iewes which alwayes worshipped the true God: so that if *Naomi* could change her birth, parentage, people and country, then also in the mind of *Ruth* she could change her God, and as shee was perswaded, shee knew her people, so she knew her God, and as shee thought shee could not change her people, so shee conceiued she would neuer alter her worship: so that these words proceede of a stedfast perswasion in the knowledge of God, and an assured hope of her mothers continuance. Euen as whē the king of *Babel* calling the almighty by the name of the God of *Shadrach, Meshach* and *Abednego*, was perswaded he was the true God, by the miraculous deliuey of those his seruants from the fiery furnace. And as the King of *Media* called him by the name of *Daniels* God, because he had deliuered him from the hungry Lyons: euen so *Ruth* called the true God by the name of *Naomies* God, because shee was instructed by her. But som wil say, is it not lawfull for vs to depend vpon our fathers or elder friends in religion, or to belieue as the church or as catholike men beleue? I answer if the question be

*Dan. 3. 29.*

*Dan. 6. 26*

1. Cor. II. 1.

Act. 17. 11.

Gal. 2. 18.

made of the necessary points of saluâtion, as the knowledge of the Trinity, the worke of our redemption, with such like, it is by no meanes lawfull for vs to depend vpon men, though they bee the chiefeft in knowledge, and the greatest in authority in all the world, if they teach it neuer so truly, yet we must haue recourse to the word of God. For *Paul* wished the *Corinthians*, that they should be followers of him, as he was of God, as if he had said, where I agree with God and his word, consent with me, where I disagree, dissent from me. Wee know what commendation the Lord giueth the *Iewes of Berea*, which sought the scriptures dayly, whether these things were so or not, which were taught by *Paul* and *Silas*: wee know how *Paul* withstood *Peter* to his face, who was a pillar of the Church, and a more ancient Apostle then himselfe, yet he was faulty: and to conclude, we must receiue the Gospell as from God, the onely Author of it, not from man, lest wee make the preaching of the Crosse of none effect, it is far surer to send vs to the fountains of the written word of God, then to the braines of the best learned in the world. Therefore the conclusion is, that wee must not in the foundation of Religion depend vpon men or Angels, though wee were neuer so truly taught by them, but must refer our faith, and the credite thereof to the only written word of God.

8 But some will say, had *Ruth* this word of God, or did *Naomi* carry it with her into the land of *Mosab*: I answer, that it is very likely they had, for the *Iewes* at this day haue the old Testament with them in all nations: secondly, if they had not, yet the Lord by his spirit did perswade the heart of *Ruth* of the truth of these things which *Naomi* had taught her, so did hee perswade his Church when there was no word written, for the space of aboue two thousand yeares: so doth hee this day keepe his Church among Infidels, where is neither preaching, word, nor sacrament, yet not one of them is lost. But if any say, let vs then forsake the written word of God, and attend to these Reuelations and



and priuate instructions of the holy Ghost: I answere, so the Iewes when they came into the land of *Canaan*, might haue eate no meat till the Lord rained downe more Manna vpon them: surely then they had all starued many thousand yeares agoe: euen so if wee looke for such extraordinary illuminations, and forsake the present foode of our soules, God his written word preached among vs, the other being ceased, wee shall iustly bee condemned, as the murderers and slaughter-slaues of our owne destruction. Let vs therefore take heed to God, not to men, ground our faith on his word, not vpon humane gifts, attend to the voice of Christ, speaking by his Ministers to the eares of the body, not waiting for extraordinary illuminations: if wee want this meanes, labor for it as a pearle worth all our Marchants substance, yea, a treasure greater the all the world. But of lighter points of Religion, if wee receiue any thing of men, who in one point haue diuers iudgements; let vs learne to examine the reasons of all, and being proued by prayer and peace of conscience leane to the best: neither doubting to depend vpon men, or the credite of the truth, but to the word. Where wee note many things: what great care ought parents, magistrates, ministers and preachers to haue ouer their children, people and subjects for their instruction, seeing as *Ruth* had truly learned of her mother in law, that did shee constantly defend, namely, the worshippe of the onely one God. If *Naomi* had peruerred her from one heathenisme to another, it is very likely shee would haue abode by it, but being instructed in the truth, and sealed by the holy spirit of promise, shee doth carefullie maintaine it, gaing vs thereby to vnderstand how inestimable is the benefite of good education, and first training vp in Religion.

9 And ought not this to bee deare vnto vs, that watch ouer the fowles of our people and children, who by vs being rightly grounded in the foundation of christian Religion may happily grow vp, like to glorious olives for the Church and common-wealth. Wee reade

Eph. I. 13



Gen. 31. 53.

Gen. 24. 42.

when *Laban* swore by his false Gods, then *Jacob* swore by the feare of his father *Izaack*, so excellent was the instruction giuen him of his father, that in the presence of idolatrous *Laban*, for fear nor fauour would he alter his religion: yea it seemed to bee fastned in his flesh, that hauing beene twenty yeeres among the idolatrous *Sirians*, yet he had not changed the maner of his oath, the which he learned of his father. Oh where are these *Isacks* in our dayes, which teach their children any Religion? indeed men are too carefull for their childrens temporall wealth, they put them to schooles and vniuersities, to bee students at the law, and men of occupations (which are good) but ask them why they do so, they will answere, that they might haue something to liue by hereafter: neuer a word I warrant you of the saluation of their soules, but for that, they will hope in God they say: and thus they compasse sea and land for trifles, but the neuer-fading health they least think vpon. In times past seruants praied to the God of their masters, but in these daies, if they should doe so, they must pray either to pride, couetousnesse, or ignorance: masters and seruants can sweare by the name of God liberally, but pray sparingly, insomuch as if the life of God consisted in their praiers, they would surely murder him, they so seldome call vpon him. Oh that this hellish behauiour of masters and seruants, could bee reduced to the line of God his word, but now they deale with their seruants, as the Egyptians did with the *Israelites*, they look for their taskes, & worldly busines, but they neuer exhort them to sacrifice to the Lord: nay, they hinder them, and call them idle persons, if there bee any forwardnes of seruants and children that waies, truly now is like seruant, like master, like maide like mistresse, like father, like sonne, like mother, like daughter, such is the seed, such is the haruest, they go from cradles to graues, and from graues to damnation, their whole care is for pleasure and wealth, and therefore they haue no part or portion but in this present life. Yet let the children of *Abraham* doe like *Abraham*

*brabam*, teach their sons, daughters, and seruants, the couenant of the Lord, that all the seed and posterity may be blessed, both with the temporall and euerlasting promise, for godlines hath the promise of this life and of the life to come. Secondly, by this we note, the fall of vngodly flatterers; which wil outwardly for shew or fauour be godly with the good, and wicked with the prophane, they will in good company temper their speech like good men, they will trudge and trauell to sermons and godly exercises, because it pleaseth some Gentleman or other, and will say to them, thy God, my God, your preacher, my preacher, your profession shall be my profession, whom you loue, I loue, whom you hate, I abhor: of this sort are many ignorant persons, one misliketh our religion, because some popish friend of his mislikes it, some speak against our gouernment, because one or other which gape for the church liuing speaketh against it: and to say the truth, it is very lamentable to see, how all religion of many is turned into man-pleasing, but these tame beasts will one day come to the slaughter as well as wilde, when it shalbe manifested, that the surest and safest way in Religion, is to depend on God, and not men.

10 *Where thou dyest*. Hauing promised her life to be spent in her mothers company, she proceedeth to her death, shewing vnto her such perfect friendship as neyther the trauels of life or sorrowes of death, could euer abrogate, and shee addeth, that euen in that place where *Naomi* should be buried, would *Ruth* be interred: for we know the annient custome was to bee buried with the fathers or predecessors, whereof vndoubtedly the cause was the hope of the resurrection, that as they were buried, so they should rise together, to bee made partakers of eternal woes, or euerlasting ioyes. And by this we obserue, the loue which wee owe vnto our fathers and friends, must be of such continuance, that it reach vnto the graue: not onely to be here the inheritors of their lands, but also being dead, to giue our bodies to their Sepulchres, and the measure of it, must

Gen. 18. 19

1. Tim. 4. 8.

Gal. 4. 15.

must bee so perfect, that wee must be the companions of life and death. And truly, such as is the loue of children to their naturall parents, such must bee the peoples to their spirituall fathers in Christ. *The Galathians to pleasure Paul would haue pulled out their owne eyes,* but men in these dayes are so farre from this liberality, towards the small number of preaching Ministers, that they will hardly giue any penny toward their maintenance: they had rather haue their gold then the Gospel of Christ, their paltry pigs then preaching: they crie out chargeable, chargeable is the Ministry, when they themselues which should pay the tenthes, yeelde not the twentieth of their increase, such suying for their right, such trying of customes, such ouer-bearing the weake, and finally, they would be religious, but the ministers must be as beggers among them. Who seeth not in many places where they crie out for preachers, and promise largely in their behalfe: yet when the Lord hath sent them, they almost stinke in their presence. I speake plainly I confesse, and yet but the truth: and moreouer, they are not onely poorely provided for, but euery base person, pesant, and pot-companion, are suffered to crow ouer them, and cry out against them. Thus Christ was before, and yet like vs, contemned of the brauest, and reuiled of the basest: the world I see is no changeling, although many hundred ages haue passed since, yet the manners thereof remaine, it agreeth in nothing, saue onely to persecute Christ: and seeing wee are sent forth as silly Lambs among ten thousand Wolues, and as men borne out of due time, although our calling bee despised, our labour vnprofitable, and we made laughing stockes, yet our paines will bee rewarded, our offences pardoned, we crowned, and they euerlastingly confounded.

13 *So let God.* Last of all, that shee might bee no more molested by her mother in law, shee confirmeth the resolution of her mind by an oath in these wordes: So let God doe vnto mee and more also, if ought but death doe separate thee and mee, which is an vsuall manner

maner of swearing in the scripture, as we read of *David* how hee swore hee would be reuenged of the churlish *Nabal*, for the vncourteous message he returned him; by his seruants, and is vsed by all the godly in the old Testament; and indeed it doth most notably describe the nature of an oath, for it is thus much in effect, I pray God confound me, if I speake not this with purpose of heart: out of the which wee note many things most profitable. First, that in euery oath we curse our owne soules, if we publish not the truth, or performe not that which we promise: as if euery time we sweare, wee should say, The Lord confound me body & soule, with *Sathan* and his Angels, if this be not so. Oh that our oath-mongers, and common swearers in our dayes would remember or vnderstand this, that whereas in their dayes they haue sworne many millions of times, so many curses and damnations they haue wished to themselves, the very consideration whereof would make them as guilty in their own consciences, as euer *Cain* was for killing a man, or *Indas* for betraying the Lord of glory: they haue with their arrowes of blasphemy shot through, and boared the Lord to the very neereest place of his life, for euery trifle. And truly as the common Inne is known by his sign, and the Black-Moore by his skin: euen so is an Atheist and carnall man by his oath. Wee shall talke with honest worldly men, who at euery word or sentence, will breake forth into most horrible swearing vpon no occasion: if they bee rebuked, they waxe much worse. We read of an *Egyptian* Israelite that blasphemed, and was by God his own commandement stoned to death. How if this law were put in practise among vs? where would the gallant companions which wil sweare by all the colours of the Mooné, become? would not they crie out to the hills to couer them, and to the rockes to fall vpon them? was it not strange, that among sixe hundred thousand men which were able to beare Armes, with old men, women and children almost innumerable, there should bee found but one man that had blasphemed, or taken God his dreadfull name

1. Sam. 24

22

Leuit. 24.

23.

Num. 1. 46

in vaine, and bee must be stoned? But among vs, if so many chosen men were taken, my life for it, there shall not be found among euery hundred, ten persons which are not common blasphemers.

*Iud. 10. 31.*

12 Oh Lord, how doth thy mercy stay the heauens from powring downe stones vpon vs, as they did vpon the Cananites. There is not now a child in the streetes, if he be able to speake, but hee murmureth an oath, onely excepted some few which haue godly parents: there is not a woman, either maid or wife, some few excepted, which doth not dayly encrease their curse by their continuall blasphemies: may wee not now say, Lord what is man that thou visting him, or the son of man that thou so regardest him. Truly the most follow the counsell of *Iobs* wife, they curse God & die. A godly martyr required to curse Christ, and he should liue, answered, seuentie yeers haue I serued him, and yet he neuer did me any hurt, why then should I curse him? And I pray you, what hurt hath the Lord done vnto you, that you thus blaspheme his honour, curse your owne soules, rebell against his lawes, and sweare many hundred times oftner then you eate or drinke: surely the disease of leprosie was contagious, and whosoever had it, was excluded from the congregation, how much more ought this poyson of swearing, and swearers to be cut off from the society of God and men? And surely now helpe O ye Gods of the earth, I mean you Magistrates and men of authority, this knot wil neuer be vnloosed, except you draw out your swords & strike it asunder: though you would giue them all your possessions, and steale away their swearing, as *Rahel* stole her fathers Idols, yet they will sweare by false gods, still as *Laban* did, that is, they must either die, or the wrath of God must be powred downe vpon vs for euer, for his curse shal neuer depart from the house of the swearer. And if you helpe not to cure this euill, the Lord shal curse both you and them with euerlasting plagues. Hee crieth and saith, whom shall I send? the ministers haue said, they will goe, yea, they haue told *Iacob* his sin, and

*E/ay 6. 3.*

*Israell*

*Israel* his transgression, and *England* his swearing also, but they come againe with *Ieremy*, vnto you O Princes, publish you the decree, that whosoever sweareth by the name of God rashly, he shold be cut off from the people, and his house sowed with salt, neuer to be builded againe.

13 Secondly, by this we obserue, that it is not lawfull to sweare but onely by the name of God, for *Ruth* saith so, *And so let God doe vnto mee and more also*. Shee calleth not heauen and earth to record, or any other thing saue onely hee which is able to punish, or else to pardon, and knoweth the secrets of euery mans hart: whereby we are taught, that it is sacriledge in God his sight, to sweare by our faith or troth, our honour or honesty, bread or drinke, or any thing else. Many thinke they auoid swearing very cleanly, if they sweare by any of these, not knowing that he that sweareth by the gold, sweareth by the Temple, and he that sweareth by the temple, sweareth by him that sitteth thereon: euen so he that sweareth by his faith, sweareth by Christ (for faith is no faith without Christ) and he that sweareth by the son, sweareth by the father and the holy Ghost. Therefore dearly beloued, let vs frame our tongues to honour, not to dishonour God, to glorifie, not to defame his name. For if he that toucheth his Saints, toucheth the apple of his eye, what doth hee which thrusteth at his name, which is dearer vnto him then heauen and earth? Surely the Lord will not hold him guiltlesse, but as hee hath not pittied the Lord in tearing him with oathes, no more shall the Lord shew any mercy to his soule from punishing it in hell.

14 Lastly, by these words of *Ruth* wee obserue, that an oath must be the last thing we produce in the testimony of any truth: She denieth her mother once, and the second time, when her sister went away, but now the third time after solemne protestation made, shee addeth an oath, as the last refuge and end of all controuersie. Against this doe all the former offend, which will not tarry till the last, but euen at the first rap out their



their oathes, as fast as a brawling dogge his barking, swearing through custome to truth and fallhood, making no difference betweene waighy matters and idle toyes, especially in gaming, playing, hunting, chiding, and such like, they spit out their poison against God himselfe, neither sparing the wounds, bloud, heart, death, and nailes of the Lord, renting him worse being in heauen, then the Iewes did vpon the Crosse. But let *Ruth* and her companions teach ten thousand of them, with what reuerence they must vse the holy name of God: she had not beene past ten yeeres with a godly woman, but shee had learned her Religion, both of faith and maners, for in this she vttereth both - but we haue a great many both men & women, which haue had twenty and thirty a peece, not with one, but with a whole church of godly persons, & yet they haue got neither faith nor manners from them, they can easily giue them leaue to practise Religion, but themselves wallow in pleasure. But bee not deceiued, God is not mocked, when hee beginneth he will make an end, and consume your viporous tonges and beastly hearts, as the fountaine of this mischiefe in the fire of hell, we are as importunate on you as the blind men of *Iericho*, the more wee are rebuked, the more wee crie vnto you, let not our Country bee cursed, our Prince remoued, our God blasphemed, his Gospel translated from vs, & our soules and bodies euerlastingly plagued. To God let vs giue prayse.

\* \*

The end of the third Lecture.

The

## The fourth Lecture.

*Ruth.* Chap. 1. verse, 18. 19. 20. 21. 22.

- 18 When shee saw that shee was steept fastlie minded to goe with her, shee left speaking vnto her.  
 19 So they went forth both vntill they came to Bethel, and when they came to Bethel, it was noised of them throughout all the City, and they said, is not this Naomi?  
 20 And shee answered, call mee not Naomi, but call me Mara, for the Almighty hath giuen me much bitternes.  
 21 I went out full, and the Lord hath caused me to returne empty, why call you mee Naomi, seeing the Lord hath humbled me, and the Almighty hath brought mee vnto aduersity.  
 22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabite, &c.



Having heard the conference betweene Naomi and Ruth, now the holy Ghost describeth the issue of this iourney, to the end of this Chapter: wherein Naomi ceaseth to vexe her daughter, or dissuade her to proceed in her purpose, but willingly taketh her, and both of them trauell to Bethel, whither they come in a most fit and acceptable time, neither hindred in their iourney, nor forgotten of their friends, but kindly receiued to their great comfort.

These words containe in them two parts, the first their conference to trauell and iourney vnto Bethel: the second is their entertainment there. The first part is exprest in the eightene and nineteene verses: & hath two members: first Naomi rested satisfied with the answere of Ruth, and vexed her no more, verse eighteen: secondly, their prosperous iourney to the City

Bethel

*Bethlehem*, verse nineteene. In the end of this verse is set down the entertainement they found there, which is this, the Citizens came flocking to see her, calling and welcomming her by name in these words. *Is not this Naomi?* vnto the which salutation she herselfe answereth in the two next verses, first acknowledging her name, but confessing herselfe vnworthy of it, in these words: *Call mee not Naomi, but call mee Mara*: secondly, shee addeth the cause of her speech, in these words: for the Lord hath giuen mee much bitternesse: this is amplified in the next verse by an Allegorie, taken from a vessell. In these words, *I went out full*: finally, shee setteth downe the vse shee maketh of her affliction, shewing vnto them, that shee could not glory in al the vaine titles of the world: first, because the Lord had humbled her, secondly, because he had brought her into aduersity: in the last verse is set downe the time when these Pilgrims came from *Moab* to *Bethlehem*, which was the beginning of Barley-haruest.

2 *When shee saw.* As *Naomi* in the beginning dealt very wisely, in the triall of her daughters before they were too far gone, so in the end she dealeth very godly with *Ruth*, in that shee yeeldeth to her answer and petitions, giuing ouer to molest her with any more obiections. This friendlie and worthie meekenes is verie commendable in all the godly, for without this they can neuer in charity and compassion trie and examine their brethren. When our Sauour Christ had dealt with the Cananitish woman about the like cause, seeing that silence would not answer her, nor deniall satisfie her, nor the opprobrious word of dog dismay her, then hee yeelded to her desire, cured her daughter, and proclaimed her faith to bee wonderfull: by which wee gather, that it is an vngodly thing, to trie any religion or in any good motion beyond their strength, for it is no doubt, but *Naomi* if she would, could haue multiplied more obiections against this enterprise of *Ruth*, but her mind was to trie her, not to trouble her, to confirme her, not to confound her, and to shew vnto her what must

Mat. 15. 22

must be her resolution, if she goe vnto the Lords people, she can hope for no earthly felicity, shee must neuer repent and turne backe againe, she must bury both country and kindred in the graue of forgetfulness, that the thoughts or desire of their fruitiō must neuer hinder the course of her religion. Whereby all the godly are by *Naomi* admonished to be carefull, whom they receiue into their company, and how gently they must entreat them, when they finde their fideliry: the Ravens will not feed their owne birdes, or yong ones, so long as they bee naked, till their feathers come out, & they know them to be their owne, which iealousie of foules must teach vs, that if wee see not the euident tokens of godlinesse, wee must not receiue, yea our own kinsmen into the secret of our hearts, to communicate vnto them the sweet fellowship wee haue with Christ, for many dayly creepe into the Church to espie our liberty, but as *Iohn* saith, if any come vnto you, and bring not this doctrine, receiue them not to house, nor bid them good speed. But in this it is strange to see how farre many godly persons are deceiued, which belieue euery light word of hipocriticall persons, esteeming them good Christians, giuing them the right hand of fellowship, and opening the treasures of the Lord to these mockers of spirituall things, casting the childrens crummes to dogs, and their pretious pearles before the filthy swine, which tread both Christ and his Gospell vnder the feet of their hearts, and rent, reuile, persecute, and seeke the destruction of the truly religious: would God wee were all *Naomies* in this point, to trie their spirites, whether they be of God, seeing so many false spirits are gone out into the world: for wee must not commit our selues to euery one that will outwardly say as wee beleuee, but first see the fruits, and afterwards iudge of the tree.

3 We know how many in the Gospell our Sauour Christ refused, which offered themselues vnto him, for none can come to him but those whom his father draweth. And against this especially doall the flattering

H

Michaels

2. Ioh. 19

3. Iohn 13

1. Ioh. 4. 1  
Ioh. 2. 24

*Michaels*, and please-man Preachers of *England* offend, which as the Prophet saith, sow pillowes vnder the el-bowes of the people, that is, they giue them rest in their singular sinnes, if they can say, Lord, Lord, they tell them they are good Christians, if they come once a weeke to the Church, their deuotion is sufficient, if they spend all their daies in ignorance and vanity, yet a few words at the latter end will recouer them: Oh how fearefull and lamentable is the condition of such pastors and people, where they are thus flattered in their sinnes, and stroked in their iniquities, they hear the Gospell, feede on the Sacraments, dwell safely in the house of God, and eate of the fatte of the lands, that their iudgement might bee without excuse, their damnation the greater, and themselues the prepared oxen for the Lords slaughter-house, they cry, peace, peace, mercy, mercy, speake of plenty, not penury, of feasting, not famines, of pleasures, not sufferings, of mirth, not mourning, of new wine, not God his word: nay, they bid the most couetous cormorants, incroching vsurers, prodigall ruffians, beastly drunkards, filthy adulterers, cursed blasphemers, common swearers, dumbe ministers, and prophane, and carnall Atheists, to hope for saluation; whereas the Apostle saith, not one of these shall inherite the kingdome of God. Is not this to cast childrens bread to dogges, and to make the most holy Gospel a cloake, nay rather a patent or charter to worke all manner of licentiousnesse? surely, if *Naomi* would not promise any thing to her dear daughter *Ruth*, but rather discourage her from following the Lord in the triall of her faith, you are as farre wide from any hope of sauing health, as heauen from the earth, or light from darknes: therefore to conclude, as the gold is not known but by the touchstone, so is not any Christian, till he be thoroughly tried in Religion, and as the Gold-smith will not accept it (though it seeme neuer so faire) till hee haue tried it, so must not wee loose the bands of sinnes, till they bee repented, or bind the breaches of iniquity, till they be satisfied,

nor

nor account any a Christian, till wee haue thoroughly tried him.

4 Other there are which will neuer be satisfied in their brethren, euery day troubling them with vaine and vnprofitable questions, neuer giuing them ouer, till they haue wearied them with their wranglings, seeking to deface them in that little knowledge which they haue, and discourage them from the profession of christian Religion. But most abhominable is the dealing of many with their neighbours, both Christian men and women, who forsaking the cursed pastime of carnall companions, espying the insufficiency of dumb and vnpreaching Ministers, burning in loue for the pure preaching of God his word, & seeking that where it is to bee found, absent themselues from their assemblies now and then, they present them to the courts as wicked Recusants, where I warrant you, they find as much fauour, as *Paul did before Felix*: thus wee are many times vniustly vexed for good consciences, turmoiled about for hearing of sermons, almost as much as any Papist, for abhorring our Religion: and this it is that feareth many, causeth other to fall backe before troubles come, and dismaie many weake soules, when they see their poore brethren in this peaceable time, vnder the gouernment of so godly and gracious a Prince, so tormented as is incredible, the experience of this is too too common in euery corner of our Country, where there is any diligent Preacher or profitable hearer. Let vs therefore my brethren with *Nao- mi*, cease to vex the godly minde. I *Ruths*, both men and women: our damnation shall be the greater, if wee draw and driue men from God, the lawes require it not, the magistrates like it not, our profession forbiddeth it, and accursed are those godies Iudges which pronounce any sentence against these innocent persons. Therefore say with the Prophet, Come let vs ascend to the mountaine of the Lord, euen to the hill of the God of *Iacob*, for he shall teach vs his vvaies, and we vwill vualke in his pathes.

*Act. 24. 28.*

*21 cb 4. 2*



Gen. 18. 14

17

Iud. 6. 31.

2 Sam. 3. 8.

Gen. 45. 28

Psal. 30. 6

Dan. 4. 33

37

Psal. 125. 1

§ So they went forth. Now are these two good women both going, and also come to *Bethel*, and vndoubtedly their tedious iourney was eased by their mutual conference: but what things hapned to them by the way, the Scripture mentioneth not, onely their intertainment is here set down, how their comming being noysed about the City, they came vnto them, and saluted their old acquaintance, *Naomi* by name. For this question, *Is not this Naomi?* after the maner of the Hebrewes, is a vsuall maner of affirmation, as we may see in some places of Scripture: Where first of all we see the wonderfull mercy of God toward *Naomi*, which in so many yeeres absent, suffered not her memory vtterly to perish, but at the first arriuing, did publish her name, and comfort her sorrowes. Thus God hath many blessings in store for the relieuing of his poore afflicted Saints, & surely he is carefull that the candle of the righteous be not put out for euer. But as in one day (after many yeeres sorrow for *Ioseph*, and famine for bread) *Jacob* receiued tidings of the welfare of his son, and prouision for his family, euen so the Lord compasseth about the faithfull with songs of deliuerance, that though heauinesse endure for a night, yet ioy cometh in the morning. Let vs therefore with the losse and laying downe of our owne liues, confesse the goodness of the Lord, for as he draue the King of *Babylon* for seuen yeeres from the throne of maiesty, to the wilderness of wild beasts, so he called him again, and restored to him his scepter and seate, established his kingdom all the daies of his life. Therefore feare not, feare not my beloued, haue wee now famine? wee shal haue plenty againe: do we carry forth our seed weeping? wee shall come againe with plentiful sheaues. Haue wee sowed in teares? we shall reape in ioy. Haue wee been strangers in other lands? we are come home with *Naomi* to the City of God his people: and finally those that feare the Lord shall be as *mount Sion*, which can neuer be moued: for as there is a time to mourn, so there is a time to reioyce, and as the wicked shall haue

haue measure for measure, so the godly shal receiue reward for reward.

6 Secondly, by these words we obserue the fruits of charity, or duty of neighbours and acquaintance: for as these Citizens of *Berthelem* came to see and to comfort *Naomi*, so must euery one beare some part of his brothers or sisters sorrow, in relieuing their troubled minds by their presence and speech. We read that *Mary* went to her cosen *Elizabeth* being with child, that they might commune and comfort themselves in the promises of the Lord. We read how the Iewes accompanied *Mary* and *Martha*, weeping for *Lazarus*, and the same also wee read was done at the death of *Dorcas*. What shall I say of the *four men*, which brought the sick of the palse vnto Christ, and most excellent is the fellowship of the Saints in the Primitiue Church, which are said to continue, and abide together with one accord, in praier & breaking of bread; so that their spirituall comfort of praying, and temporall refreshing of corporall food, were priuate to any, but also for their comfort, as a yong child is wrapped in his swadling cloaths, so was the infancy of Christs Church maintained by the company of their faithfull fellowship. Oh that we could loue and liue thus together in the bond of vnity and Christian concord, that as wee are members of one body, so we should not be so strange one to another, as if the eye had neuer scene the foot, or the head neuer knowne the legges: such is the scornfulnes of our age, wherein men are ashamed of Christ in his members, if they be a little fallen into decay, how hardly will they comfort them, as these *Ephrathites* do *Naomi*, a poore widow now, though once a noble woman. They will rather curse the with *Shemei*, then blesse them with *Tziba*, but let the faithfull like feeling members of their brethrens afflictions, looke vpon the *Naomies* in our dayes, some are poore and friendlesse, other sicke and harborlesse, some sorrowfull, some hungry, & many destitute, let vs gather to vs these members of Christ, our company will more refresh them then our

*Luc. I. 39*  
*Iob. II. 33*  
*Act. 9. 39.*

*Mar. 2. 4*

contribution, our talke more then our Almes, our feeling and fellowv praiers, more then the distribution of our money, let vs lay hold on that, and yet forget not this, for as God hath giuen both to vs, so he looketh vve should giue both to other.

7 Thirdly, by this vve obserue, howv the vworld is wont to comfort one another, for these Bethlemites say vnto her, *Is not this Naomi?* that is, they comfort her with the consideration of her name, which in Hebrew signifieth beautifull or pleasant, as if they had said vnto her, Although thou art old, yet thou art beautifull, for thou remainest *Naomi* still, thy name is a Prophet vnto thee, to forwarne thee of thy welfare, and if thou be now like the stubble after the crop, yet thou shalt shortly be as the greene hearbe or pleasant plant, comfort thy selfe, *Jacob* alwayes preuailed with God, because his name was alwaies *Israel*: the Doue shall be chaste, because it is a Doue: the eye shall be bright, because it is an eye, and *Naomi* shall be blessed, because shee is *Naomi*. Thus worldly persons with worldly things, and the best they desire most, is outward prosperity. Neither is this simply vnlawfull, for such as is the sore, such must be the salue, and where the wound is, the medicine must be ministred: if in the world they be oppressed, in the same they may not only wish, but pray for release, yet alwayes remember, that friends and parties must so desire and request it, as may be most for the glory of God. Therefore this is our duty, that in praying for earthly benefites, wee aime at God his will, but in desiring spirituall blessings, we must regard our saluations. And more also, wee must not so rauish the mindes of the worldly afflicted, as if they had no other hope, but this temporall welfare: but so promise the blessings of God, as they may haue a spiritual signification, for worldly misery is abated but with euerlasting felicity.

8 And *Naomi* said. In these words *Naomi* answereth to the comforts of her friends, and telleth them shee rather desireth to be called *Mara* then *Naomi*, that is, bitter

ter then beautifull: whereby shee teacheth vs how vaine are outward and worldly titles: for which cause *James* wisheth vs not to be called many masters, knowing we shall receiue the greater damnation, as if hee had said worldly honour bringeth death, but desire or loue of carnall comforts cause damnation. When the Arke of God was taken by the Philistines, and the sons of *Heli* both slaine, the wife of *Phinehas*, the sonne of *Heli*, died after his trauell, and named her sonne *Jechabod*: which is by interpretation, Where is the glory? although there a manchild was borne, yet the woman forgot not her sorrow, because the Arke of God was taken by the heathen, for if she were the daughter to the chiefe in *Israel*, as shee was, and wife to the third: yet what glory had shee of her place, when her husband was iustly slaine, and her people ouercome, therefore shee called her son (no glory) for neither dignity of place, highnesse of birth, fruitfulness of children, or the dominion ouer a whole Country, may minister any comfort to them whome the Lord hath humbled. *Rahel* that bid *Iacob* giue her children, or else shee should die, at the birth of her second child died, and yet had children, she supposed if shee were made fruitfull, and had many children, she could not chuse but liue in felicity, but hauing the first, shee called him *Ioseph*, because God would adde more, yet at the second, shee called him *Ben-oni*, which is the sonne of her sorrow, because she died in trauell, so that shee which accounted bearing of children her chiefest ioy, by that which shee loued, came her greatest sorrow: Thus *Naomi*, which was once as beautifull, and pleasant in prosperity as any, yet now in aduersity, who more bitter then she, yea the very remembrance of her name increaseth her griefe. Were shee the daughter of a Prince, yet now being a begger, it is a greater discomfort vnto her, then if shee had beene borne poore, for mans nature is like a pleasant plant, which prospereth when it groweth higher and higher, but decayeth if it fall lower and lower: if *Naomi* had beene a Lady, yet

H 4                      hauing

*Iam. 3. 1.**1. Sam. 4. 21**Gen. 30. 7.**Gen. 35. 11*

hauing lost her husband, children, and wealth, the cogitation of her wonted welfare encrease the disquietnesse, euen as *Phinehas* his wife and *Rahel*, at the birth of their children. Why then do men thus highly esteeme of worldly vaine glory? Cannot one measure of honor afford one mite of comfort to a distressed person? Doe not men because they are proper, wax proud, and because they are learned, ambitious, what then is the fruit of worldly titles? is pride the reward of proportion? loftinesse of worship? scornfulnes of riches? and ambition of learning? surely these things in the day of trouble can minister no medicine to make ease, if godlinesse be not with the. What was *Achan* the better for his gold when hee was stoned to death? *Abolon* for his beauty when he was hanged? *Haman* for his honour, when he was mounted vpon his own gallows? the sorcerers of *Egypt* for their knowledge, when darknes was ouer the land? or *Herod* for the peoples voice, when they cried a God and not man, and the wormes fell vpon him, and consumed him? Trust not therefore in Princes, much lesse in the titles of Princes, in the strength of an horse, much lesse in the wealth of man: say not, I shal be the better because I am a Gentleman, a Doctor or a Noble-man, for when *Salomon* had considered all these things, he said all is vanity and vexatiō of spirit.

9 For the Almighty hath. This is the reason wherfore shee denieth her name, or rather changeth it, shewing that her first name had nothing in it, which did expresse the relation between her selfe and it, but her second name doth most significantly declare her bitter affliction. Where we first of all obserue the cause which moued the fathers to giue such names to their children, which to signifie, or put them in mind of their duty, or some other euent. So God called the first man *Adam*, which is as much as man, or earth, because hee was made of the earth, or the red earth: so *Adam* called his wife *Chauuath* (which we call *Henah*, by reason of the Hebrew letters) because she should bee the mother of all

Ecc. 1. 17.

18

Gen. 1. 27  
Gen. 3. 20



all liuing: the like may bee said of *Noah, Seth, Abraham, Isaac, Israel, Samuel, Iohn Baptist* and many others, who being named either by the Lord himselſe, or by other, were ſo called, to put them in mind of their duties, or to note the thankfulnes of their parents. The which is alſo lawfull for godly parents now to imitate, in giuing ſuch names to their children, as may be notes to all the world of their profeſſion. But ſome cannot brook this liberty, accounting it newneſſe and preciſeneſſe in them that uſe it, as though it were a deadly finne, one iot to depart from the cuſtome of the multitude. But this curioſity is well confuted by the name of *Iohn Baptist*: anceſtors muſt not alwayes bee followed, thoſe which are new Creatures in Ieſus Chriſt, may alſo haue new names. But in this the world bewrays their palpable ignorance, for they like the old names which were very plaine in their owne tongue, wherein they were giuen, but Engliſh names they cannot abide belike for very feare, leſt their names ſhould bee witneſſes of condemnation againſt their licentiousnes. Again, they account it a glory proper to a few perſons, to bee called by the worldly ſurnames of ſome of their great anceſtors, but they will not beare theſe names of reioycing, thanksgiuing, repentance, godlines, mercy, conſtancy, and ſuch like, they will as eaſilie admit them, as a deafe Adder the voice of the charmer. But let the godly in this uſe chriſtian wiſdome, and ancient liberty; for that which was lawfull in this point in the firſt age, the Iewes common-wealth, and the Primitiue church, with the practiſe of al ages ſince, is alſo lawfull for them to giue holy and ſignificant names to their children, for I would haue all (if it were poſſible) to haue no other names but ſuch as they vnderſtand: if they be called by the names of the ancient fathers, kings or Prophets, which we read of in the Scriptures, it is alſo needfull that they vnderſtand the liues & diſpoſitions of thoſe perſons, that as they haue theſe for the euidence of their names, ſo they might look vpon them, as the examples of their faith and maners.

to Second.

Luc. i. 59.

60



Añ. 8. 23.

Psa. 31. 10.

Iob. 16.

10 Secondly, by this wee note, what God his childre thinke of their suffering, which *Naomi* setteth out by this word *Bitternesse*: for bitternes of all other tastes doth most dull the sense, and corrupt the stomacke, so that they account their afflictions, as sharpe to them, as to any, and may as lawfully complaine of them vnto the Lord. This I speake for instruction of them that are ignorant, and the comfort of the afflicted. First for instruction, because some thinke they are not truely religious except they feele their miseries no more than a stone when they are afflicted, and this maketh them so to wauer and doubt of themselues, that in their greatest plagues, they can hardly receiue any comfort, being alwaies troubled with this, that if they were faithfull, they should delight more in their tribulations. Yet beloued, marke a little. *Naomi* calleth it in this place bitternes, as if she had called the enemy to her health, for when *Peter* would expresse the danger of *Simon Magus*, because hee offered money for the gift of the holy Ghost, he telleth them he is in the very gall of bitternesse, by that Metaphor or Allegory, declaring the loathsomnesse of sinne to his soule, as bitternesse to the body. *David* saith, that his affliction was his death, as if he had said, euen as a man striueth to bee deliuered in the pangs of death, so hee from his tribulation. *Iob* that mirror of patience, did so delight in his sufferings, that in one place he seemeth to accuse God himself, to adde to his transgressiōs, that is, to make his sins seem greater then they were, & how doth he desire to plead with God about his affliction, and cursed the day and howre of his birth. Our Sauour would neuer haue warned vs that in the world wee should haue sorrow and lamentation, had he not knowne that the smart of our sufferings, would thrust forth abundance of teares, through the vehemency of the paines, and presently hee addeth a secret comparison betweene a woman in trauell, and a Christian in persecution, so that as the one hath most vehement sorrowes and pitiful lamentations, so also may the other: infinite testi-

testimonies might bee brought for the prooffe of this, to teach vs that God his children are made of flesh, as well as of spirit, and the flesh is weake though the spirit be willing: therefore wee may feare, and crie vnder the burthen of our paines that our afflictions are bitter vnto vs, and that the hand of the Lord is grievous vpon vs. Again, for the comfort of the godly I speake this, that if any haue more grievously complained of their sufferings, let them impute it to the sharpenes of their paines, and the weakenesse of their natures: wee see this *Naomi* calleth bitterness vnto her, such as shee would not willingly take, except it were for the physicke of her soule, and now almost ten yeeres space this grieve hath growne vpon her, so that it may seeme of all others shee was most grieued, for now she vttereth her mind as freshly, as if the potion were yet vndigested in the stomacke. Bee comforted therefore my sorrowfull brethren and sisters, you see you are not alone in this misery, for *Dauid*, *Iob*, *Naomi*, *Annah*, *Nehemiah*, and many other are as farre indebted to the Lord in this point, as euer was any: strue to suppress it by praier, and quench it by singing of *Psalmes*: neither let vs iudge but charitably of those which in this case are troubled, bee it for the losse of their children, the death of their husbands, the decay of their wealth, or the lacke or want of their health. If they seeme impatient and weaker then our selues, let vs beare part of their burthens vpon our christian comforts, that they with vs, and wee with them, like feeling members of the same infirmities, may sustaine our crosses by our mutuall supplications, and obtaine our deliuerance by the blood of Christ.

**II** *I went out full.* In these words she amplifieth her former complaint by this comparison of a full vessell, and an empty, shewing that as the fullest vessell is the soundest and the emptiest good for nothing, so it fa-  
reth with her, when shee looketh vpon her former life, when she went forth she had plenty, but now shee

retur-

1. King. 10.  
17

2. II. cap.  
11. 14.

Ier. 12. 3

returneth in want : then shee was found, but now broken, then ioyfull, but now sorrowfull : why should shee bee called pleasant or beautifull, or by her old name, seeng God hath humbled her, whereas in times past, hee vpheld her in prosperity, but now hee hath cast her downe into aduersity. Where wee first of all obserue the nature of worldly prosperity, which to day is like a full vessell, but to morrow like an emptie, now it is greene, anon it is withered, now it groweth, anon it is cut down, now like *Nabuchadnezzar* sitting vpon his throne, with his Counsellors and Courtiers of estate about him, but anon both Court and Country driue him to the company of wilde beasts, for as a little breach emptieth the barrell, so a little trouble bringeth worldly welfare to wallow in the mire : like a bladder, so is worldly prosperity, a puffe doth make it swell, but a pricke doth make it fall againe. Therefore we read of none, either King or Country, which had such a prosperous estate, but it had one enemy or other to worke his woe : if we consider the raigne of *Salomon*, where gold was innumerable, and siluer as plentiful as stones, yet it wanted not his miseries, the people were punished by paymentes to their prince, the King was threatned with the losse of ten parts of his Kingdome, and God stirred *Hadad* the Edomite against him, where ended their peace. Where is then the royalty of *Salomon* ? was it not cast downe in one day, his riches consumed, his buildings burned, his children captiuated, his wisdom turned into idolatry, his prosperity decayed, and all his honour ouerturned ? Oh that worldling, would consider their fickle estate, and be admonished of their imminent danger ? the Lord putteth them into his ballance, and finding them too light, casteth them out. *Ieremy* saith, they are but fatted sheepe, kept for the day of slaughter, now in the pasture, and presently in the fire, they are but aduanced to be cast downe againe, as the vessell is filled to be emptied in due time, the eares which are now filled of corne in the field, anon shal lie without

out on the dunghill. *Babylon* the Queene of the world, which ruled as yet, was troden down, and made a servant. *Tyrus* that crowned men with her wealth, was consumed by water: for the Lord of hosts decreeth all this, to staine the pride of glory; and to bring to contempt all that be mighty vpon the earth. Weepe; weepe O daughters of honour, the dayes will come, when the tender shall not be regarded, for your wealth shall not alwaies endure, the crowne abideth not from generation to generation, your houses shall bee ouerturned, your names forgotten, your children empou-erished, your glory defaced, your inheritance changed, your welfare powred on the earth like water, and your worshipp shall be neuer repaired. This haue God his dearest children felt, and the greatest trees haue been scorched with the fire of God his wrath, for hee is not delighted in worldly brauery, but hath buried great treasure in the sea which shall neuer be found, to keep mankind from the end of his purpose: for this is their honour, they get nothing, but with much trauell, and in one howre, loose labour, life, and wealth.

12 Secondly, that which in our Text is, *The Lord hath bumbled me*: in the Hebrew is, *The Lord hath testified, or witnessed against me*, for by his iudgements hee humbleth vs, as it were producing witnesses to accuse vs of our iniquities, as we see in common iudgements, all things passe by euidence, if they be ancient, and by witnes if they be late, so the Lord when hee hath a quarrell against vs, hee first proueth vs guilty by witnesse of our sinnes, and then punisheth vs for committing transgressions. For this cause *Moses* commandeth the booke of the Law to be laid vp in the side of the Arke of the Couenant, for a witnesse against the people: So the Lord speaketh by *Dauid*, Heare O my people, and I will speake, heare O *Israel*, and I will testifie vnto thee, for I am thy God: and after this he reporteth his witnesse against them, first that their sacrifices were corrupted, that their Religion was all outward: they spake well, but did ill. And thus God witnesseth the sinnes

Isai. 23. 9

Esa. 23. 9

Deut. 31. 5.  
26.

Psa. 50. 7.

Psa. 28. 1.

Eftb. 7. 9.

Efta. 2. 19.

finnes of common-weales by the changing of their Prince, the finnes of publike persons, by casting them out of their office, the finnes of priuate persons, sometimes by imprisonment, sometimes by scourging or poerty, and sometimes by sicknesse, alluding to trials of iudgement, where the Noble is condemned for treason, as well as the meaner person for stealing. And this my beloued, hath the Lord testified against vs, our peace hath beene threatned by warre, our Prince by treason, our banqueting by famine, our excesse by penury, our pride by pouerty, our peoples contempt of preaching by pestilence, and still the Lord hideth our sinne from this witnesse, that we might repent for all. Then we must needs set down with our selues, that our actions are noted, our prophaning of saboths registred, our contempts against God his ministers described, the times of our drunkennesse, idlenesse, and wantonnesse numbred, our own consciences examined, the witnessles produced, we arraigned, & now, euen now, before God his iudgement seat, in danger to be euerlastingly condemned, for as *Naomi* saith, the Lord emprieth vs of his graces, and testifieth against vs: who shall pleade for vs when the Iudge knoweth our guiltinesse, surely, surely, there is no hope of pardon, but to the penitent, and patience must be praied for, that our suffering may bee eased.

13 *So she returned with Ruth the Moabiteſſe with her,* This verse is the conclusion of this first Chapter, where is described the time of *Naomies* returne vnto *Bethel* from the country of *Moab*, which was the beginning of barley-haruest, that the report shee heard in *Moab*, (how God had visited his people, & giuen them bread) might at her first arriuall bee found true: wherein is noted the blessing of God vnto her, that shee came in the beginning of haruest, the pleasantest and profitablest time of all the yeere. This barley haruest was in the latter part of the first moneth, and the beginning of the second among the Iewes, which with vs are called *March* and *April*, for the warmenesse of those countries



tries are such, that their haruest is ripe much sooner then in ours.

By the which also we note, that shee had: a prosperous successe in her iourney, that euen in those dangerous dayes shee came safely to *Bethlem*: all those doubts which in the beginning wee shewed you, might haue hindred her iorney, she well ouer passed: for no doubt is so rare a matter if any let had beene offered, the holy Ghost wold not haue omitted it, so that this teacheth vs with *Naomi*, that as she was not hindred in her trauel from *Moab*, to God his people, euen so must not wee be stayed from the profession of true Religion: She was an old woman, yet she would goe so tedious a iorney to the company of the faithfull: therefore let no man thinke, that age excuseth them from the true worship of God, or sincere profession of Religion. She had little company to encourage her, onely poor *Ruth* her daughter in law waited vpon her, therefore it must not hinder or discourage vs that so few follow Religion, for Christs flocke is a little flocke, like the first fruits of the haruest field, which is but a handfull to many cartloades. *Naomi* aduentured her body, and forsooke her goods, to come to the house of the Lord: Oh how cold are our dayes, when men neede neither of both, yea they will hardly goe any farther for knowledge then the vilest Atheist in the world. And to conclude, many dangers hung ouer her head, yet by the prouidence of God shee escaped all, euen so my brethren admit no delays, inuent no excuses, receiue no hinderances, imagine no suspitions, and abstaine from all staies which may let you from coming to the mountaine of the Lord the companie of the faithful, for blessed is the people, whole God is *Iehouah*, and it is better to abide but one day in the courts of the Lord, than a thousand yeares in the palaces of the wicked. Now let vs giue praise to the Lord.

*The end of the fourth Lecture.*

The



## The fifth Lecture.

Ruth. Chap. 2. verse, 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.

- 1 Now Naomies husband had a kinsman, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz.
- 2 And when Ruth the Moabitish said vnto her mother in law, Let mee goe I pray thee into the field, to gather eares after him, in whose eyes I shall find fauour, and shee said, Goe my daughter.
- 3 And shee went and came to gather in the field, after the Reapers: and she met with the possession of a field, pertaining to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech.
- 4 And behold when Boaz came from Berthelem, hee saide to the Reapers, The Lord be with you, And they said, The Lord blesse thee.
- 5 And Boaz said to his seruant which was appointed ouer the reapers, Whose is this maid?
- 6 And the seruant which was appointed ouer the reapers, answered and said, This is the Moabitish maid, which came with Naomi from the Country of Moab.
- 7 Which came and said, let me gather I pray you among the sheaues after the reapers, and so shee came, and stayed here from morning untill night, onely shee tarried a little at her house.



N the former Chapter wee heard by our generall diuision, that the occasion of this Historie was therein contained: but now in these three Chapters following, is declared the meanes whereby this marriage was accomplished, whereof the first is described in this second Chapter, which is the acquaintance of Boaz and Ruth, and

and the circumstances thereof, as shall appeare in the speciall treatise of euery particular thing. The occasion of this acquaintance is the gleaning of *Ruth*, in the field of *Boaz*. These seuen verses contain two parts, the first and principall part is of *Boaz*, and the second of *Ruth*. The first part is contained in the 1. 4. 5. 6. 7. verses wherein *Boaz* is described, ver. 1. to bee *Naomies* kinsman by her husband. Secondly, to be a man of great wealth: in the other verse is set downe his diligence which came to the field to visite his workmen, and view the companie. His actions after he came to the Field, are first the salutation of the reapers, verse 4., and they doe the like to him: secondly, his question, he asketh his seruant who *Ruth* was, verse 5. To which question the seruant answereth, first, telling his Master, that it was *Ruth* the Moabiteesse, the companion of *Naomi*, verse 6. Secondly, he excuseth her gathering, because she asked leaue, and tarried there but onely that morning, verse 7.

The second part which respecteth *Ruth* is contained verse 2. 3. Wherein, first is her petition, she asketh leaue of her mother, to goe and gather ears, where she shuld find fauor, and her mother granteth, ver. 2. Secondly her chance, & good hap, the place where she gathereth is described, which was the field or possession of *Boaz*, her husbands kinsman. Of these parts let vs briefly speake, as the spirit of God shall giue vtterance, and the time permit.

2 Now *Naomies* husband. In this verse is contained the description of *Boaz*, vpon whom the whole historie following dependeth. This *Boaz* war the sonne of *Salmon*, who was sonne to *Nahassan*, the Prince of the hoast of *Iudah*: the mother of *Boaz* was *Rachab* the harlot (which receiued the spies of *Israel* into her house at *Iericho*) as wee see in *Mathew*, and is commended for her faith, by the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrewes. So that euery way wee see this dignity commended vnto vs: if vve looke for birth, his grandfather was the chiefe of the princely Tribe of *Iudah*: if for au-

1. Chr. 2. 10.  
Ios. 2. 4. 5.  
Muth. 1. 4.  
Heb. 11. 31.

Cap. 2. 23.

thority he was, saith this Scripture of great power : if for wealth his inheritance must needs be great , who was deriued of such noble ancestors, and the reaping of his corne lasted to the end of all haruest, & the chief of all, his religion is excellently commended vnto vs in the text and history following : so that we haue not to deale here with meane and base personages, being all of a kindred, howsoeuer some are sooner come to decay then other : but out of this we may learne many profitable lessons.

3 First, that seeing *Boaz* and *Elimelech* are said to be kinsmen, as those which are descended from the same predecessors or ancestry, wee are admonished of the frailty and vanity of worldly dignity, that howsoeuer parents prouide for the maintenance of posterity, yet the Lord must dispose the decay of their children : Here we see poore *Naomi* hath a wealthy, and an honourable kinsman, yet she is a destitute and a desolate widdow. Her husband and shee were no meane persons, but vndoubtedly both descended of noble families : the yeeres were but few since the death of *Isuah*, vnder whom the inheritance of euery Tribe was giuen by lot, and all the Iewes and Israelites wealthy possessors : yet see this godly *Naomi* is faine to liue of the gleanings of her daughter, which neither her parents nor her husband did euer thinke vpon. Behold therefore as in a glasse, the perfect image of temporall felicity, the father a King, the children beggers, the father honourable, the sonne not worshipfull, the predecessors the chiefest in authority, but the successors the meanest in calling : this made the Fathers thinke that the world was like the sea, here a mighty waue & there a great downefall, some thought it to bee like Ice, where a man can neuer stand sure, but the one will be breaking, or he be sliding, some like to trees, whereof the tallest are soonest ouerturned, but all agree in this that worldly felicity is miserable vanitie : for our present wealth is like a pleasant summer, which must needs come to an end : though all the world

world should striue to the contrary: it was accounted to King *David*, for a speciall blessing of God vnto him, and none other, that hee should not be without a sonne to sit on his seat, if his posterity should obserue his commandements: yet we see in *Ioseph* and *Mary* the mother of Christ, being both of his offspring, how they could not obtaine in his own City a Chamber to lie in, but were faine to lodge in a stable, so that this is not onely to the wicked, but hapneth to the dearest Saints of God. *Adam* continued not still in Paradise, but was cast out, that his felicity might bee heauenly, and not earthly: euen so the posterity of the righteous are brought into pouerty, that they set not their mindes vpon temporall glory. Therefore the Lord doth here correct vs with pinching pouerty, that there wee should not with the worlde, bee condemned for delighting in vanitie.

4 Then by this wee learne humility in our wealth, and worship, honour and dignity: set not vp your horns so high, saith *Dauid*, and if riches encrease, settle not your hearts vpon them, for the Lord resisteth the proud, and giueth grace to the humble and meeke. Wee reade of stately Kings and Emperours, which haue beene cast from the throne to the footstoolle, of wealthy persons, which in one howre haue beene vtterly vndone, but of children, whose parents were honourable and rich, many thousands brought to perpetuall slauery. If you feare not your owne estates, yet care for your prosperity, and make much of them whom now you see cast downe, the poore, the destitute, the despised, the miserable: for if *Ionathan* in his honour, make of *Dauid* in his humility, when *Dauid* commeth to his Kingdome, hee will aduance his offspring to his owne Table: euen so if you make much of them, that are poore, now when you shall bee humbled in your posterity, the Lorde shall prouide for your issue by these that haue beene fauoured by you. The VVhele of

2. Sam. 7. 12.

Luc. 2. 7.

Psal. 62. 10.

the world runneth round, sometime that which was lowest is highest, and that which is highest is made low againe: so bee you assured, the Lord aduanceth daily out of the dust, to sit with Princes: therefore make you friendes of the vnrighteous Mammon, that when you shall haue need, they may receiue you into their euerlasting habitations. Distribute liberally, giue plentifully, liue peaceably, walke humbly, for the wealth of the world doth not alwayes last, neither the crowne from generation to generation.

LUC. 18. 24.

25

5 Secondly, by this wee gather, that the godly may safely enioy great possessions, and of the blessings of God be exceeding rich men: but some will say, indeed they may bee wealthy, but with the hazard of their soules, for Christ saith, How hardly shall they which haue riches, enter into the Kingdome of God: it is easier for a cable to goe through the eye of an needle, then for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of heauen. Then if the danger of it be so great, the poorest condition is the safest welfare. I grant you, but Christ speaketh of carnall wealthy, which make their goods their God, as after he saith, those that put their trust in their riches. Of this sort the world was neuer fuller: as on the contrary, of the other there was neuer fewer, you shall haue them in all places which speake against the Gospell, because it is an enemy to their liuings and offices, promotions and honours, like *Demetrius* for *Diana*, a heathen Diuell: you shall haue other that will offer largely to the Gospel, like the yong man that came to Christ, but when it toucheth a little greater cost, then farewell Religion. But this is the fault of the men, not of their wealth, and yet I am perswaded that there are many wealthy *Abrahams*, which will giue of the tenthes of their possessions to the heauenly *Melchisedech*, Iesus Christ, many *Lots* that will harbor the Angels of God, and rather with violence to their own daughters then to the righteous: and finally, like to this *Boaz* in riches and religion, of whom we dayly pray the Lord increase the number.

6 Thirdly



6 Thirdly, we see in this *Boaz* an excellent example of the reward of religion and faith: for we haue heard that hee was the sonne of *Rachab*, which receiued the spies of *Josuah*, who afterward was married to *Salmon* the son of *Nahissan*, by whom came this godly and wealthy *Boaz*. In this then wee see true the saying of the Apostle, that godlinesse hath the promises of this life, and of the life to come: for in her selfe shee was blessed with an honourable marriage, in her posterity with a godly and wealthy sonne. This my beloued is a notable encouragement to Religion, for Christ faith, that whosoever shall for him forsake father and mother, wife or children, shall receiue many times so much in this world, but eternall saluation in the life to come. This answereth, and stoppeth the mouthes of the enemies which call the professors Bankrupts impoverished, and decayed persons, yea, as base as beggers in this world, which by their Religion vndo themselves and their posterity. But on the contrary, wee affirme that Religion brineeth no discommodity, euen in worldly things, the reason is, because it teacheth vs to vse our riches aright. If a man had mountaines of money, and knew not how to employ it, what profit could hee receiue thereby? euen so, surely, without Christ and his Gospell, I meane the true knowledge thereof, there is no lawfull vse of these worldly benefites, and except euery one learne to apply them by the word of God, he possesseth his wealth, as a thiefe doth the purse of a true man, and in the presence of God is no better then a violent robber, which taketh away the money from the lawfull possessors, which haue proued and learned the way to vse it, and as they haue it without his knowledge, euen so they shall vse it without his blessing. Therefore be not discouraged my dear brethren, come forward in Religion, it is the diuel that telleth you, you must make bread of stones, that is, you must relie vpon the world, and follow the custome thereof: there is greater plenty, and store in the garners of God his word, then in all the corne-fields of the world.



Luc. 18. 30.

Job. 6. 13.



Iob. 6. 13.

world. Hee which could feede *five thousand people* with *five barley loaves* and *two fishes*, hath hee not enough for the maintenance of thy family? Hee which fed the hoast of *Israel* almost forty yeeres with Angels foode: are not the heauens his for euermore? when almost all the world was in a famine, did he not prouide for his seruant *Elijah*, first commaunding the rauens to bring him bread and meate, morning and euening to the brocke *Cherith*, and that being dried vp, sustained him with a widdow and her sonne, by a handfull of meale and a little oyle for a long season. Did not our gracious father multiplie the oyle of a poor Prophets widdow into many vessels, which before could not fill one? And what shall I say more? I haue neuer seene the righteous forsaken, or their children left destitute.

1. Kin. 17. 4  
9.

2. Kin. 4. 5. 6

1. Pers. 2. 3.

7 And *Ruth*. After the holy Ghost had set down the description of *Boaz*, as the necessarie occasion to vnderstand that which followeth, in the next place hee expretheth this of *Ruth*. Wherein he sheweth vs the carefulnes of *Ruth*, for her mother and her selfe being in a strange place, would not in hunger harbor at home, but rather aduenture her perill in an honest labour, by going abroad to gleane in the Fieldes, therefore to her mother she commeth and asketh leaue, which beeing granted, forth she goeth, the providence of the Lord directing her iourney, she commeth to the haruest field of *Boaz* her kinsman.

Where first of all we gather, what manner of life they lead after they came to *Bethlesem*, namely, a very poore, base and a despised estate, not halfe so good to see to, as that which they lead and liued among the *Moabites*, inso much as one may now say vnto me, you tolde vs euen now, the golden rewardes and precious commoditie of true Religion, which it bringeth to all them that faithfully receiue it, but you see these two godly women, as armed examples against your selfe, they liue wealthily in *Moab*, but poorely in *Judah*, with the wicked they found gentle liberality, but with

with the godly they endure wofull pouerty. What cold intertainment doe they find at *Bethlem*, euen in the Church of God, for whose sake one forsooke her countrie, the other her wealth, and both of them their welfare? so that the profession of Religion looseth our friends, denieth our country, disquieteth our peace, ingendreth our trouble, consumeth our wealth, and decayeth our substance. Is this the profite of your profession, which promiseth mountaines of security, and payeth multitude of miseries? How shall we be encouraged to Religion, when at the first entry wee shall pay so great an in-come, and depart from a fine worth all our substance? To this I answere, that if the beginning bee not so ioyfull as you or they wished, yet in the end answered their expectation, I grant, you shall first find a little want, but in the end you shall possesse a great gaine. A man that hath a thousand pounds laid beside him, and layeth it out vpon a bargaine, wherof he shall receiue no profite in many yeeres, but the date expired, and the day of receit come, he receiueh his owne, and many thousand pounds for his gain, you will grant at the first hee emptieth his coffers and bags, and leaueth himselfe bare and monyles, yet you would accoſit him a foole, if he would not vpon sure bands of so great aduantage aduenture his owne, and giue forth his monie: Euen so it is in Religion, it is a pearle for which we must sell both liuing and lands, and yet it is worth both, and many a thousand times more: if thou seele not the profite at the first, tarry a while, thou hast the promise and band of the Lord of hostes, hee is able and willing to performe and pay at the time appointed, and if thou canst abide a little want of earthly commodities, shortly thou shalt see them rolling vpon thee in excellent abundance, and exceeding quantities.

8 And this teacheth vs with what mind we must embrace religion, not for any present commodity, or temporall gaine, but with deniall of our liues & riches that they may serue vs as ordinary expenses in our

*Tumultuosa esse solent initia bonorum, exitus magis gratus & amoenus.*

journey to euerlasting saluation, the kingdome of heauen. For they are much deceiued, that receiue the truth to increase their wealth, making Christianity a gainefull trade, for although it hath the promises, yet it hath not alway the possession of things in this life, but as the right heires are many times put beside their inheritances, which are possessed by vnlawfull owners, so the godly are the right heires of the whole world, although the wicked haue driuen them out of possession, for the which the Apostle said, that godlines hark the promises of this life, and also of the life to come. Againe, those promises that the meeke shall possesse the earth, and their seed shall inherit the land, and especially, that the very saue which are the elected heires of grace, are also the appointed inheritors of this world. But this my beloued must establish our minds, that as the seed which is cast into the ground, seemeth for a long season to be lost, yet in the end it groweth for the comfort of mankind, and the great profit of the possessors, so although at the first the fruit of religion is peradventure but sharpe in worldly affaires, yet if we wait like the husbandman vnuill haruest, our consciences shall bee plentifull garners of heauenly corne, for the present comfort of our liues, and the perpetuall benefite of our soules. A man dresseth his vineyard all the yeare long, and doth nothing but empty his purse, and weary his body in the tillage and pruning and digging thereof, yet there is but one vintage or time of gathering grapes, euen so wee must willingly depart with our wealth, and trauell in diligence, for the preparing of our soules, to beare fruit to the Lord; and the end will be most profitable, though the beginning seeme most chargeable. The like may be said of the Marchant, which cutteth the seas, of the Goldsmith that melteth his mettall, and of euery worldly trade which at the first beginne with charges, but at the last acquite the cost, and satisfie the desire, and end with the encrease of substance, which are but carnall and outward things, to put vs in mind of inward and spirituall significati-  
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ons, for as in none of these wee are discouraged by the costly entrance, so more accursed shall wee be, if wee forsake the Well of the water of life, the running fountaine of euerlasting health, to rake in the puddles of transitory riches, for feare the one will giue vs too much ease, and for feare the other will withdraw our wealth, which is like the Gergesits sinne, which had rather possesse their heards of swine, then enioy the presence and preaching of Iesus Christ. Come not to Religion for hope of worldly abundance, for neither *Abraham*, or the *Israelites*, or *Rachab*, or *Ruth*, or *Zacharias*, or *Cornelius*, or any of the faithfull had this intention: But the Lord for our farther strengthening hath giuen two blessings, that if the temporall faile which are but conditionall, yet the euerlasting benefites shall neuer deceiue: for although the leaues fall, yet the bodies of the trees abide continually. Therefore let vs stay our minds vpon this double string, which is grounded vpon the credite of him that giueth the promise, before whom heauen and earth shall decay, and the sun shall loose his light, rather then he frustrate the hope of the godly.

9 Secondly, here we note a most excellent example of obedience to parents, and auoiding of idlenesse, *Ruth* was lately come to *Bethlehem*, where it is likely she might long haue tarried, before her mother would haue entreated her to so base a labour as gathering of barley, but seeing her selfe employed in nothing, first, she commeth to her mother, and after asketh leaue, as one desirous of some honest, though neuer so simple a calling. It shee had departed, not acquainting her with it, being to labour for their liuing, shee might wel be excused: but this seemeth much, that shee must come vnto her, not to tell her shee would goe to such a busines, but to giue her leaue to glean in the fields, promising she would not goe beyond her bounds, but onely gather in that place, where the owner thereof should grant her licence: vnto which when the mother had granted, forth shee goeth to the field of *Boaz*, where

*Mat. 9.*

*Gen. 12. 1*

*Exo. 12. 38.*

*Ios. 6. 29.*

*Luk. 19. 8.*

*Ab. 10. 1*

Gen. 37. 10.

Eph. 6. 1.

where we see what effect godlinesse worketh in the hearts of children, for *Ruth* offered her seruice which her mother entreated not, shee abhorred no labor, were it neuer so base, shee was not ashamed of her pouerty, euen in a strange country: and all this must be imputed to her Religion. For as *Ioseph* for the feare of God, bore with the wrath of his father, when hee told him his vision of the sunne and the moone, and the eleuen starres bowing vnto him: so did *Ruth* with the poore estate of her mother in law, which had nothing to liue by: thus the Apostle teacheth children to obey their parents in all things, that is, not only to be willing to performe their commandements, but also to bee alway contented with their estate, for this wretchednes of cursed children, is worthy to bee condemned, wherein those which haue wealthy parents, will please them, till they haue gotten their riches, which are like the prodigall sonne in the Gospell: other because their parents are poore, will thinke they are bound vnto the in nothing, because they haue little or no wealth to leaue behind them: both these kinds of children are here condemned by the example of *Ruth*, who did not onely forsake her wealth to goe with her mother, but also labour with her hands to maintain her liuing, yea to her stepmother, which is more commendable, then if it were done to her naturall parents.

10 The vse of this doctrine is, to exhort and stir vp parents, to be more carefull to teach their children the feare of the Lord, then to leaue them mountaines of riches behind them, which if they will practise, would not their countenances to bee so sorrowfull as often they are? would not their naturall Oliues, I meane their children, annoint their faces with the oyle of cheerefulnessse: if mothers eyther would, or could do, as *Naomi* did for *Ruth*, teach their children the feare of the Lord, their hearts should not be so heavy, for their yngracious life. But since parents haue no care to instruct their children, children haue no feare to disobey their parents. Will they in these dayes acquaint

quaint their fathers and mothers with their iourneyes and labors: or returne not they headlong to their own vtter vndoing? they chuse them masters and seruants without fathers consent, they marry and are married against parents good will: doe they not take pleasure for profit, and pastime for godlines? thinking themselves to be borne for wantonnes, referring the care of their old age to their gray headed parents, and neuer considering till beggery catch their bodies, and damnation their soules. Surely, as the fruit is sower because it is not grafted, so their manners are wicked, because they want religion: this lieth then in the ouer louing parents, who make such dandling of their babes while they are yong, that they care not for their fathers when they bee old. They consider not that Lions are tamed when they are young, that trees are bowed when they are twiggies: And that *Salomon* saith, Instruct a child when hee is yong, the way of his life, and when he is old, he shall not depart from it. Their owne ignorance is so palpable, that their children learne nothing but folly: they themselves so vain, that the other are wanton: they so obstinate, that their seed is rebellious: and finally, a wilde vine bringeth forth nothing but wild grapes, and ignorant parents must haue vngracious children. Therefore seeing by nature you would haue obedient & wise children, teach them the feare of the Lord, for that is the beginning of wisdom, and if you would haue your names in your posterity long to endure, the prayse of it continueth for euer.

11 Thirdly, here we may note an example of christian honesty, one of the fruits of Religion: for shee telleth her mother, shee would goe gather where shee could get leaue, as if the holy Ghost had said, the gleanings are for the poor, yet poore men must not take them without the consent and fauour of the owners. The Lord euery where exhorteth to giue to the poore, but he neuer bid the poor take where they found, vnknewing to the possessor: but they must as *Ruth* heere doth

*Prov. 22.6.*

*Prov. 1.7.*  
*Ps. 111.10*

*Leuit. 19.9*  
*Deut. 15.7.*  
*1. Cor. 9.7.*



Deu. 23. 24.

25

doth, not take their right, the very gift of the Lord, without the fauour of man. This condemneth the rashnes of many, which thinke if they bee poore, that men are bound to giue to them, and small matters they may take freely, without the consent of him that possesseth it: yet we see not onely religion, but also plain reason to gaine say it: for the least thing a man hath is his own, as well as the greatest, & one law condemneth the taking of a handfull, and a bushell of corne, though the offence be not so great. But some say, it was permitted by the Lord, that a man might take the eares of corne, and rub them in his hand and eate them, as the Disciples did, without the consent and trespas of the possessor, he might also take a bunch of grapes and eat them, and likewise the fruit of the orchard, by the same law, and therefore wee may take without the consent of him that possesseth it. I answer, if the question be made of an apple, or an eare of corne, or a bunch of grapes, as the it was permitted, so I think there is none that will now stand in it: but then you must remember by the same law, that no man might put a sickle into the corne to reape downe a handfull, neither yet fill any little measure with grapes or apples, without the consent of the owner. But now men wil take great measures and quantities, and yet think not themselues satisfied, and being winked at for once, yet will proceed till they be forbidden, and then will they vncharitably and vngodly report of such men as wil not suffer their goods to be spoiled by them.

12 Lastly, when her mother had granted, forth she goeth, and commeth to the possessions of Boaz her kinsman: where wee may behold the hand of the Lord fauouring her diligence, & leading her to the appointed place, where among all other she might be, as shee was most gently entreated: for shee, a silly stranger, knowing none beside her mother, not acquainted with people or country, was ignorant whither to goe, but God which directeth the goings of all, ordered her footsteps to his possession, where first, she should finde  
fauour

fauour and feeding, that by this meanes the way for her marriage might bee prepared. Where we see an excellent example of the prouidence of God, looking vpon the poorest as well as the richest, and working all things in the world from the highest to the lowest. Hee which directeth the descending of the sparrowes vpon the ground, doth he not also consider the goings of the poore. It is no dishonour to him (as some would haue it, that they might more freely giue themselues to iniquity) to note euery vile and loathsome thing in the world, or to looke vpon the base as well as the best: surely, if any thing bee vncomely, it is to the sinneful, but to him which is alwayes righteous, are all things pure. What parents doe not loue the basest partes of their childrens bodies, which were borne of themselves? yet greater is the loue of God vnto vs, then the loue of a mother to her owne son, neither doth he, nor can he but loue the meanest worke of his creation, as well as chiefest, and the sillie flie as well as the stately king. Oh how doth this comfort vs more then all the world beside, when wee know the king of glory beholde our nakednes and pouerty, and giueth his angels charge ouer vs, that not the poorest *Lazarus* may bee lost, but our bodies either eased with reliefe, or parted from life, our soules may ascend to the bosome of *Abraham*. Euen he which directeth the seruant of *Abraham* to the City of *Nachor*, and brought *Rebecca* out to draw water, and moued her answere to his prayer, her curtesie to satisfie his expectation, did also lead *Ruth* to the Fields of *Boaz*, and guideth all the faithfull to the end of their desires, knowing the counsels of the hart, disposing the words of the mouth, feeding the hungry with good things, and sendeth the rich away empty, conducting vs al for his mercies sake to walke in his pathes of righteounes.

13 But behold, After these things set downe by the holy Ghost concerning *Ruth*, hee returned to *Boaz* againe, and this verse is the beginning of the second part of that which respecteth him, in the which is declared

Ma. 10. 14

*The ma-  
sters foot  
maketh the  
best land, &  
his eye the  
fattest horse*

*1. Kin. 5. 16*

*2. Kin. 4. 18*

clared his coming from *Bethalem*, his salutation to the reapers, and their answer to him againe.

By the which wee gather the duty of all masters of families, and great persons in the world, which is, not onely to bee carefull their businesse be performed by other, but also that themselves as the eye-witnes of their seruants fidelity, should looke ouer their labours. This wee may see in *Boaz*, he commeth from the Citie to the haruest field: he had committed the care of the Reapers to a trustie seruant: yet not contented therewith, in his own person hee commeth to the worke: and surely, this diligence of Lords and Masters, causeth faithfull labourers and seruants; as the idlenesse and negligence of the one causeth the vnfaithfulness and slackenes of the other, for whiles the Masters follow their worldly pleasures, the seruants omit their carefull busines. Therefore we may read in the building of the first and second Temple, there were ouerseers of the worke, beside the ordinarie labourers: and oftentimes would king *Salomon*, and *Nehemiah* come in their own persons to view the workes. The like may we reade of *Elixeas* host, which was abroad in the field with his Reapers, when his little sonne fell sicke, insomuch as this seemed a point of necessity, that euery one, whom the Lord hath made a master of possessions, although hee labour not, yet must hee certifie himselfe of his labourers diligence, with his own eye-sight, which condemneth many inferiour masters of negligent slothfulness, and idle negligence, in not regarding their worldly talents giuen them of God, but referring the disposition to their stewards and seruants refuse in their owne persons to deale with God his benefites, as too base things for their occupations, which is the cause that so many masters fall to bee seruants, and so many seruants ascend to bee masters: their wealth is quickly consumed, and these which would not bee their owne seruants to keep themselves in labour and wealth, come to bee other mens slaues in drudgery or beggery, either in themselves, or their posterity.

posterity, as the iust iudgement of God : for hee that would not vse his talent, had it taken from him. Therefore seeing this ancient Nobility were employed in their owne busines, let not the new and sodain vpstart wealthy man among vs disdaine at poore labouring persons, or thinke it any disgrace to doe as their fathers did, faithfully to labour in the meanest vocation.

14 Secondly, astet *Boaz*, came to the field, he saluteth the Repers, and saith, *The Lord bee with you*, and they answered, *The Lord blesse thee* : where wee see the first thing hee doth, hee prayeth for the laborers, in this his godly salutation, for he wisheth the presence of God to be with them, which is his fauor, for his presence signifieth his fauour and blessing (as absence betokeneth his iudgements and cursings.) This wee may see in the dedication of the Temple by *Salomon*, the glory of the Lord so filled it, that the Priests were not able to sacrifice in it, and the Angel saluteth *Mary* the mother of Christ with the selfe same words, *The Lord bee with thee* : wherein he signified the wonderfull fauour of God vnto her, which should be the mother of the *Messiah*. And on the contrary, the absence of the Lord, is the heauy wrath of his maiesty, as appeareth by that complaint of *Dauid*, Will the Lord ablent himselfe for euer, or hath hee forgotten to bee mercifull? and *Paul* saith, that the wicked are separated with euerlasting destruction from the glory and presence of God. By the which wee learne how reuerently we must vse our salutations, lest when we wish the fauour of the Lord to bee present with others, his mercy through our vnaduided praier be absent frō our selues : for how lamentable is it, to heare in many places, with one breath praiers to bee powred out for other, and bitter blasphemies against the maiesty of God, with wooll curies to the death of their soules? May wee gather any comfort by these salutations, when men in derision passing by other, shall vse the salutation of *Boaz*, other wishing they know not what, do as well by their ignorant

1.Kin.8.II

Luc.I. 28.

Psal.77.7

ignorant greeting pray for their owne destruction, as their neighbours prosperity? such precious balmes let them not come vpon the heades of the righteous, for this is as certaine as the world shall haue an end, that all their supplications, either at morning, noone, or euening, are but meere customary speeches, proceeding of the vsage and manner of men, not of the spirit or religion of the faithfull. Yet let it not grieue vs to vse this language of *Canaan*, the phrase of the Scripture in our ciuill and godly communication, and though all the world crie out, Puritanisme, Puritanisme, yet blessed is he that is not offended at Christ. Let the Samaritanes worship in their mountaines, but we will worship at *Ierusalem* in spirit and in truth, and let vs vse in despite of the world, the weighty words of Gods spirit, that they may bee our owne mother speech, wee the children of the Church, and the Heires of Salvation.

*Psal. 127. 2.*

15 But in this it is noted, to bee the duety of all men, to salute them whom they meet, to pray for the successe of labourers and workemen. For well wee must remember, that except the Lord doe builde the house, the builders build but in vaine, and except the Lord doe giue the victorie, what though millions of horses bee prepared for the battell? *surely it is in vaine to rise earely, and goe late to bed, and eate the bread of carefulness*, to labour hard, and to compas the world by a thousand deuises, except their owne prayers, and the prayers of the faithfull, appeare in the presence of the Eternall for them. And this noteth the carnall constitutions of many mens hearts among vs, which rashly enterprise their works without calling on the Lord, & vnprofitably end the to their own destruction. Oh how it grieueth God his Saints, dayly to heare his name abused by swearing, euen among them that husband the earth. They crie out on their seruants morning and euening, abroad abroad to worke in the field, but who saith, Come let vs first fall down together, and humble our selues in the presence of God, and call for a blessing

a blessing vpon our labours, or say thus much, The Lord be with vs : no, no, that will hinder their dayes worke, they hire their seruants to labour, and not to pray. Therefore the Prophet saith, You sow much, but you bring but little in, you eate, but you are not filled, you drinke, and are not satisfied, you cloath your selues but you are not warmed, and he that receiueth wages, putteth it into a broken bag: therefore thus sayeth the Lord, Hearken vnto my wayes. This is the plague vpon vs that mind our wealth, and not the welfare of God his Church, therefore we labour like slaues, but others receiue the benefite by vs : we imagine the earth bringeth forth of it selfe, children are borne by nature, the cloudes must needs raine, and our fruits must needs encrease : thus wee make many Gods, whil : wee ascribe the power of God to his creatures. But bee not so rude as bruit beasts, the dogge will craue his meate at the hands of his Master : more accursed are they which pray not for a blessing at the hands of God the father.

Hag. 1. 6

16 Thirdly, by this salutation of *Boaz* wee obserue the duty of elder persons or superiours, which is first to salute or speake to their inferiours, as masters to seruants, magistrates to subiects, and pastors to their people : yet against this, in outward behauior we haue many and dayly offences, for you shal haue Gentlemen & Yeomen which will hardly speake to a poore man, being asked a question by him, much lesse whe they meet him will they giue any courteous or friendly greeting. But here we see *Boaz* though honourable, yet humble, saluteth his poore and hired reapers, who condemneth ten thousand that are contrarie minded, for proud and surly persons. Old *Ely* would speake to yong *Samuel*, a little boy, though he were the high Priest, yet hee scorned not so gentle a child, what then shall become of this stately person, which being saluted, will not salute againe as if euery word were gold that cometh from them, so sparing are they to speake to a poor or a simple man, whereas with their betters, their tongues are



too bigge for their mouthes, whom they weary with their vnprofitable bablings. This kind of euill spirite will not be cast out till the heart bee humbled, pride abated, sorrow for sinne increased, and the whole man perfectly regenerated, for by thy wordes thou shalt be iustified, & by thy words thou shalt be condemned, for an humble heart will shew it with meekenes, but a proud heart will looke strangely.

17 Fourthly, as Boaz prayed for the reapers, so the Reapers returned to him, and said, *The Lord blesse thee*: Where wee see a mutuall salutation much commended, for as he saluted, so was hee saluted, like to the Queene of *Shebah*, which giueth princely gifts to king *Salomon*, and *Salomon* gaue royall rewards to her again: so that inferiours are bound, by the same law with as kind affection to pray for other, as they themselues were first entreated: for this too much shamefastnesse in many is worthy blame, because it doth not onely couer the countenance, but also couer the tongue, leauing them speechlesse, when they are to answere their superiours: but as these labouring Reapers vse Boaz, so also must wee any of our betters: which is with reuerence to speake our minds, and godlinesse to pray for their welfare: and therefore we must put on the spirit of meekenesse, and euery one esteem better of another then of our selues. But some will say, there is no such necessity of salutation, as you would make it, for *Elizehab* sending his seruant, commanded him to salute no man by the way, and if any saluted him hee should not answere them: likewise our Sauour Christ sending his Disciples to preach, willed them not to salute any by the way: therefore it is no such sign of pride as you would make it.

To the which I answere, first, that *Elizeah* sent his man in wonderfull hast, which respected the life of the *Shunamites* son, therefore he willeth him to admit no let or hindrance in his iourney, but with all speede to goe forward, inso much as hee should not do the common curtesie of strangers, either in salutation or an-

swere,

2. *Kim. 4. 25*

*Luc. 10. 4.*

swere: Euen so meaneth our Sauour, that his Disciples, being hastily sent as it were, to gather the haruest of the Lord, might admit no delay, either necessary, or vnnecessary businesse. And this teacheth vs that the labour of preaching excelleth al earthly duties, yea that all other must serue to it as handmaides and seruants, to further the course, & not hinder the proceedings. Therefore this must remain inuiolable, as grounded on the law of God and men, that courteous and godly salutations are very commendable.

*Then Boaz.* Now in these three verses following, insueth the communication had with his seruant, who *Ruth* was: vnto which his seruant telleth or answereth in the 6. and 7. verses. First, that it is *Ruth* which came with *Naomi* from the country of *Moab*: Secondly, that shee asked him leaue to gather among the sheaues: thirdly, that she came but that morning, and had continued till that instant. Where wee see the carefulnes of *Boaz* in doing good, would know the persons, whether they were worthy or not: and the faithfulness of the seruant, which so plainly declareth the truth to his

Master. And this is the pure meaning of the

wordes: other doctrine can none be drawn

from hence, and therefore let vs giue

praise to God for that which hath

beene spoken.

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The end of the fifth Lecture.

The

## The sixth Lecture.

*Ruth. Chap. 2. verse, 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14.*

- 8 Then said Boaz to Ruth. Hearest thou my daughter, goe to none other Field to gather, neither goe from hence, but abide here by my maidens.
- 9 Let thine eyes be on the Field that they doe reape, and goe after the maidens: Haue I not charged the seruants that they touch thee not? Moreover, when thou art thirsty, goe vnto the vessels and drinke of that which the seruants haue drawne.
- 10 Then shee fell on her face, and bowed her selfe to the ground, and said vnto him, How haue I found fauour in thy eyes that thou shouldest know me, since I am a stranger.
- 11 And Boaz answered and said vnto her, All is told, and shewed me that thou hast done vnto thy mother in Law, since the death of thy husband, and how thou hast left thy father and mother, and the land where thou wast borne, and art come vnto a people which thou knewest not in times past.
- 12 The Lord recompence thy worke, and a full reward be giuen thee of the Lord God of Israel, vnder whose wings thou art come to trust.
- 13 Then shee said, let me find fauour in thy sight, my Lord, for thou hast comforted me, and spoken to the heart of thy handmaid yet I shall not be like to one of thy maids.
- 14 And Boaz said vnto her, At meale time come thou hither, and eate of the bread, and dippe thy morsell in the vinnegar, and shee sate beside the reapers, &c.



N these words the holy Ghost declareth the communication which Boaz had with Ruth, for so soone as he vnderstood who she was, hee turned his speech from the man to the woman. This conference, according to the number of the persons, hath two parts. The first

is of *Boaz*, and the second, of *Ruth*. The first part which respecteth *Boaz* is the singular curtesie hee offereth to *Ruth*, ver. 8. 9. 14. Wherein first hee biddeth her to glean freely among his maidens, not onely in that field, but also wheresoeuer the Reapers bestow themselues: secondly, he commandeth his seruants that they doe her no iniurie, but giue her drinke when she is thirsty, and himselfe called her to meat, and gaue her so liberally, that she being sufficed, left for her mother.

The other part which concerneth *Ruth*, is her manner of behauiour to this courteous entertainment of *Boaz*, wherein first shee boweth her selfe to the ground, verse tenth. Secondly, she confesseth the greatnesse of his kindnesse in the same verse, because shee was a stranger, and her vnworthinesse of any benefite, verse thirteene, because shee shold be as one of his maidens. For this speech of *Ruth*, *Boaz* sheweth the cause of all his curtesie, verse 11. because she had dealt so well with her mother in law, and had forsaken Country and Kindred to come to the people of God, therefore shee deserued to bee honourably entreated: secondly, he prayeth for her, v. 12 that the Lord would not frustrate his promise, deceiue her hope, but recompence her labour, and shield her with his wings. Of these parts let vs speake in order, as the spirit shall giue utterance, and the time permit.

2 Then said *Boaz*. So soone as hee vnderstood who that woman was, whereof hee had demanded his seruant, he turneth his speech vnto her, that so soone as might be, hee might comfort her afflicted pouerty, & testifie any good will to a godly stranger: where first of all it is commendable, that he vouchsafeth to cal so base a person by the name of daughter, for truly this louing word bewrayeth the tender affection of a godly heart, forgetting his lofty degree, and calling an abiect stranger by the name of daughter, which proueth that hee longed to giue vnto her some comfort of kindnes: this humble and most tender title of daughter and sonne,

Esay. 17. 22

Luc. 23. 28.

are verie vsuall in the Scripture, for when the Lord would comfort the Church of the Iewes against the blasphemies of *Senacherib* and *Rabsaketh*, he calleth it a virgin the daughter of *Sion*, as if he had said, euen as a father is carefull for the wealth of his daughter, so do I vwatch for the welfare of my Church, in like manner Christ our Sauour comforted the women that wept at his death, by name of the daughters of Ierusalem.

Out of the which we gather this profitable doctrine, that it is one property and duty of an humble mind, to speake kindly where it wisheth friendly, especially, when wee talke to our brethren, and the professors of the same religion, our hearts must be as the sweet Roses, and our words as soft as butter, to supple and refresh their troubled dayes. For we must not do as many haue both in their writings and familiar speeches comforted them with the vilest reproches, tanting speeches, and vncharitablest titles they could inuent, that the poison of aspes may seem to lodge in their mouths, being by their words right diuels, they speake so cursedly, but handle them if they bee faulty with gentle words, for me in authority must punish with the sword of magistrates, not the wordes of slanderers, equals by admonition, not by reuiling: inferiors by petition, not by exclamations. If we will haue humble hearts, wee must shew them by gentle words, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh: the faithfull are compared to sheepe, which are meeke and silent, but the reprobate to dogs, which are alwayes barking, and brawling. If we brand other with the marke of contempt, we burne our selues with the iron of an vngodly tongue: many can be content to distribute their wealth liberally, but their scornefull words disgrace their deuotion, because they taste more of wormwood then of the rose: and this I haue noted in many great persons, that their words are as kind to their dogs as to the poore. Oh how vnlike are they to the Lord himselfe, which calleth vs sonnes, to this godly *Boax*, which calleth

calleth *Ruth* his daughter, to the Apostle *Paul*, which calleth the meanest in the Church of God a brother. Why doe you forget your selues to be the children of *Adam*? or rather will you not be their fellow-heires of grace, that thus raigne ouer your brethren in disdainefull speeches, as though heauen were not high inough for you both to abide in.

3 *Goe not hence.* Now wee are come to another curtesie of *Boaz*, which consisteth in his commandement he giueth to *Ruth*, first, that shee should not goe into any other Field to gather: secondly, that shee should ioyne her selfe to his maidens: thirdly, that shee should follow the Reapers whether soeuer they goe: that by this it seemeth the man was delighted to handle her gently. Was it not sufficient that hee suffered her without denial or reproofe, or if he gaue her leaue by name aboute many other (as no doubt but there were many in the field) but he must admit her into the company of his owne maidens: or hauing giuen her that liberty, he must also bid her to follow his Reapers, whether soeuer they goe? surely, this was strange kindnes to a strange woman, to be entreated more like a daughter then a *Moabit* esse; nay, he addeth the second part of his commandement, telling her that hee had charged his seruants quietly to endure her presence, and giue her for her necessity. Where we first of all note the heauenly example of godly liberality, how farre it differeth from worldly pinch-penies. They giue in gentlenesse, the other in pride, they in chearefulnesse, the other in murmuring, they in liberality, the other in couetousnesse: and looke how many degrees the Moone is aboue the earth, so many the gifts of the godly surpasse the carnall: the reason of this is, because the one are perswaded to what end they giue, but the other doe thinke it to be cast into the sea. Wee reade of the *Israelites*, when the Tabernacle of the Lord was to be builded, they offered so much, that *Mosis* proclaimed they should offer no more: this heat of liberality is wel cooled in this frozen age, for wee haue much use, but

Exo. 36.9



little water : as the ise will afford no water till it bee thawed, so men will giue nothing to the Church, poor, or Tabernacle of the Lord, til they be dead: now there is such struiuing to goe formost in godly contributions, that euery one sitteth stil, many plucke frō the church personages, & profits, tithes and sanctified offerings, but few adde one mite into the Lords treasure. Let the poore be famished, the gospel vnfurnished, the Churches vnbuilded, the people vntaught, learning contēned, idle and ignorant persons aduanced, and many poore soules condemned for want of the bread of life: yet they say still, come, let vs search for more treasure, let vs take to our selues the houses of God in possession, yea, they spare not the very Altars of the Lord, but thinke it a charge that the Sacraments should bee so often administred, at the cost of the Parish. Oh most miserable and vngodly behauiour of wicked worldlings, who, like the Lions Den, suffer all to come in, but none to come out: like the Adamant, which draweth all things, but casteth abroad nothing. Where is the wonted contribution, *which in the Primitiue Church wee reade?* The Apostle commended the *Macedonians, that they gaue beyond their power, willingly, not of constraint.* Which answereth the carnall obiection of many which say, they must giue of their abundance, so if they haue not abundance, they are exempted from giuing. But the holy Ghost would exempt none, for euery one of his ability is bound to giue to Church and poore, none must appeare before the Lord empty, he which had not a Lambe, must offer a Doue, and shee which had no more, gaue two mites into the Lodes treasure. The seruant for his wages, the labourer for his hire, the craftsman for his taking, the yeoman for his profits, the Gentleman for his office, the Noble man for his reuenues, must euery one giue somewhat to the poor and religion, but some take from the Church one hundred pounds a yeere, and giue scant an hundred shillings, some haue more, and some haue lesse, and they prey vpon vs as the Eagles on the Altars, carrying with their

1. Cor. 16. 1.

2. Cor. 8. 23.

Dent. 16.

Leuit. 12.

Luk. 21. 2.

their commodities coales of fire, which shall burn both their houses and progenie, because they tooke it from the Lord.

4 Secondly, in this kindnesse of *Boaz* vnto *Ruth*, this is worthy to be noted, that he commandeth his seruants to offer her no wrong: for to touch, is to iniurie in many places of Scripture, as when the Lord speaketh by the Prophet *David*, Touch not mine anointed, neither doe my Prophets any harme. That is, neither doe you hurt my Prophets or anointed. And againe, by the Prophet *Zacharie*, He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye, that is, which hurteth you, harmeth the tenderest place of all his owne body: euen so doth *Boaz* take it in this place. For well knew that good man, that her simplicity would be quickly abused by the rigour of his seruants, and wee know it hath beene, and also is a common plague to most of the godly, euill and discourteous seruants, as appeareth in the history of *Abraham* and *Lot*, and very often the Masters which are well affected in Religion, are abused by their seruants, in their friends. If they be worshipfull, then the seruants will churlishly entertaine those godly persons which resort to their masters houses: if they be higher they will scorne them: if baser they will enuie them: this mischief had godly *Ioseph* noted, when hee commaunded his seruants to vse his Brethren so kindly: and *David* by a seruant was whetted on to be reuenged vpon *Saul*. Therefore Right Worshipfull, and yet our Brethren in Christ, as you are carefull in your owne persons to doe good to the godly: euen so follow this *Boaz*, in commanding your seruants to deale friendly also. I know you shall neuer choose all your seruants of your owne disposition, yet if you often warne them, you may chance to winne them, for the beginning of Religion is the loue of them that professe it, euen as hunger in a sicke person is a token of recovery. Then shall you cheerefully receiue Christ into your houses, in his poore members, and ioyfully assure your: consci-

*Psa.* 105. 15

*Zach.* 1. 8.

*Gen.* 13. 7.

*Gen.* 42. 25.

*1. Sam.* 34

35

Mar. 10. 13

consciences, you haue vnfaignedly loued him, for hee which hath giuen his Angels charge ouer vs, willeth also that wee should giue our seruants charge ouer our brethren: the vnkindnesse which many poore soules haue receiued at the hands of your churlish & stubborn seruants, hath discomfited them more then al your liberality hath comforted them. What accessle could the little children haue to Christ, when the Disciples forbad them? euen so, how shall wee repaire to your dwellings, when your owne seruants, so much as in them lieth, diswarne vs of your houses, keepe vs from your presence, enuie our meetings, and deride our profession?

§ *Wherefore shee fell.* This verse concerneth *Ruth*, and her answer to those words of *Boaz*, first her gesture is described, that shee fell vpon the earth, and bowed her selfe to the ground, that is, with all shew of humility, secondly, she commendeth this his kind curtesie, because shee was a stranger: so that by outward behauiour, shee gratifieth his gentlenesse, and exalteth his liberality toward her, by the consideration of her owne person, which was a stranger, and therefore vnworthy of so great kindnes.

Out of the which we chiefly obserue, first, that it is a duety of the poorer sort, not onely to acknowledge their thankfulness by wordes, but also to testifie it by outward submission: for *Abraham* himselfe vsed it euen to the idolatrous *Hittites*, whē they gaue him leaue to bury his dead twice together. This noteth a greater thankfulness then all the words of the world: in somuch as it is accounted a speciall duty belonging to superiours, as wee may see in *Bathsheba* to her husband, when shee came to tell him how *Adoniah* reigned, and likewise in King *Salomon* toward her, when shee came to aske *Abisag*. Now, if these stately persons bowed themselves but in curtesie, much more ought wee of duety. Then is here condemned, the vnciuil behauiour of many stout persons, which are so farre from bowing, that they will hardly thanke their brethren  
for

Gen. 23. 7.

12.

1. King. 1

26.

1. Kin. 2. 19

for their liberalities, accounting it their duety as they say, to giue, as if also it were not their duety to bee thankefull. The knowne example of the ten Leapers, doth much commend this kind of thankefull behauiour, and also condemne the ingratefull affection. Other there bee that are in such loue, with this cap and knee, that it doth them more good to see the poore people bend vnto them, then they reioyce that they haue giuen for Christs sake, insomuch as they giue, that themselues and not the Lord might bee honoured.

This lacke of reuerence in the one, and loue of honour in the other, are both vnlawfull, because they both proceed from one roote, which is the pride of our owne heartes, and the conceite of our owne persons.

6 But some will say, we doe but as that godly *Mordecai* did, which refused to honour the wicked *Haman*, so we abstain from doing reuerence to the proud and vaine-glorious, because wee will not feede their disposition. Vnto whom I answere, that there were many causes for which *Mordecai* refused to bend vnto *Haman*, which they can neuer alledge for themselues: the first, because he was a wicked Amalekite, of a nation whom the Lord commanded the Iewes vtterly to destroy, neither to spare man, woman or child, as appeareth in the history of *Saul*, who, because he transgressed this commandement of God in sauing *Agag* their King, and certaine oxen to sacrifice, it cost him his kingdome and displeasure of God. Because of this law of the Lord *Mordecai* would doe no honour to this child of destruction, and was blamelesse.

Secondly, it is thought that the honour which *Haman* obtained, was proper onely to God, because hee was aduanced aboue all other: and such kind of reuerence wee must alway beware of, for *Sedrach*, *Mesbach*, and *Abednego* had rather die then fall downe before the Image of the King of *Babylon*: euen so we must not giue more to man then is his owne, but vnto *Cesar* the things

*Hest.* 3. 2.

*Exo.* 17. 41

*Deu.* 25. 17.

*I. Sam.* 15.

9.

*Dan.* 3. 16.

17. 18.

things which are *Cesors*, & vnto God the things which are Gods. And if any for these causes defend their stately behauiour, let them consider that the Lord bids vs not to destroy, but rather to loue our enemies. And although they require such worshippe as is due onely to God, yet we must not refuse to giue them that which belongeth to man. Other can be content to honour them whom they know to be godly, but the wicked they thinke vnworthy of all reuerence, because our Sauour would doe none to *Herod* or *Pilate*, *Paul* to the high Priest, when hee called him painted wall.

To whom I answere, that Christ (though hee called *Herod* a foxe, and would doe no miracle before him, because he desired but to wonder, and not to glorifie God by it.) Yet gaue to *Herod* that duety which pertained vnto him. Likewise vnto *Pilate*, when hee tolde him, his power came of the Lord: so *Paul* did reuerence, not only the high Priest, but also *Felix*, *Festus*, and *Agrippa*, who were heathen men, though Magistrates, and therefore were honourable by the law of God. So then this must remaine for a grounded truth, that our betters must bee honoured as men, not worshipped as God, wee must with *Abraham* bend, as well to the idolatrous *Hebron*, as with *Bathshebah* to godly *Dauid*, if they receiue more then they are worthie, it is not our default, but their danger, let vs giue to the prophaneest person his right, and vngodliest caitife, that which is his owne.

7 Secondly, by this wee note, that the godly in giuing, must haue no respect of persons, country or kindred, strangers or neighbours children, as *Bow* did here *Ruth*, who by her own confession was a stranger, and therefore vnworthy: but we shewed you this in the first chapter, by the example of the *Moabites*, to *Elimelech* and his family, to bee a thing incident by very naturall men, and by them condemned that vse it not, much more in them that haue knowne the truth. The which *Abraham* did to the Angels, where-  
upon

upon the Apostle wisheth, to keepe hospitality, for so some haue receiued Angels in stead of men. The Lord commaunded very sharply, that no violence be done to strangers, neither yet that any should oppresse them.

Whereby the vngodly vsage of strangers, that many wish for among vs, is too wicked, enuying that any should bee permitted to come and sojourne among vs, like free-borne children. Yet herein wee are to prayse G O D, that these persons cannot bite, although they barks at poore harborlesse strangers, and also that he hath blessed our Magistrates with more pittifull minds. And let these persons know and consider, that it is as easie to go out, as to come into *England*, that is, they may as soone bee driuen to other places out of their owne Country to bee Strangers there, as these are, repayed for succour hither. The vncertainty of worldly estate that hath brought great Princes to extreame pouerty, should bridle their churlish and vngodly affections, from offering one thought of iniury to these poore harbourlesse strangers. Wee know the parable of Christ, of a man that trauelled from *Iericho* to *Ierusalem*, and fell among theeues: the kindnesse of that stranger, a Samaritane, should moue vs to do good to strangers, while the world standeth, seeing wee are more helped by their presence, then by our owne neighbours: but these kind persons that thus raile vpon poor strangers, are such as are grieved against God and men, who in their hearts would haue no man liuing in the land besides themselves, and their cursed posteritie. But some will say, you make too much account of strangers, the Lord doth not make such reckoning of them, because, *forbidding vsurie to the Iewes*, yet hee permitted them to take vsurie of the Strangers. I answer, those Strangers were the cursed Cananites, and none other, whome G O D had vowed to destruction, to the intent the Iewes might haue them in all slavery. Of them hee permitted to take vsury: for this

*Gen. 18. 1.*

*to 9.*

*Heb. 13. 2.*

*Exo. 22. 21.*

*Leui. 19. 33*

*Deut. 23. 20*



Dent. 28. 12

this is the blessing of God vpon that people, that they should be able to lend to other, but stand in no need to borrow of other. Therefore that being but a permission for the Iewes onely, hath ceased in that Common-wealth: but in Christ there is no difference of Iew or Gentile, Male or Female, Bond or Free, for all are his, and hee the Lords: so that now the name of a stranger is quite ceased, but all are neighbours and brethren for euermore.

8 And Boaz answered. In this verse is contained the reply of Boaz vnto the speech of Ruth, wherein is set downe the true cause of his liberality vnto her, first, in regard of her mother in law, and his kinswoman, with whom she had dealt so well in her owne Country: secondly, in regard of her selfe, she had forsaken father and mother, with country and kindred, and come among strange people.

Where we first obserue a singular encouragement to obey our godly parents, for we see that our good actions need not to be preached abroad by other for our farther commendation, but at the time appointed they will shew themselues, as the life of trees by sending forth leaues in the spring time of the yeare. Ruth as we haue heard dealt most louingly with her mother in law in Moab, yet you see that her kindnesse hath followed her to Bethe'lem in Iudab, many miles distant the one from the other. If it had beene knowne there to a few onely, it had beene sufficient: but being spread abroad, the chiefe man in a City doth commend her for it, among a multitude in a haruest field, the place could not hide it, were it neuer so farre off, the time not conceale it, bee it neuer so secret: the commendation of it be couered, because shee was a stranger, nor the credite of it be lost in another Country. Such is the nature of good things which wee doe to other, that obliuion can neuer bury it. What needeth this boasting of our almes deedes, like the blowing of a Trumpet? this bragging of our worthines? some of their manhood, some of their friendshippe; other of their riches

riches, and many of their labour: as if they slept not soundly, till all the world did ring of their commendation. This one thing looseth all our reward, for it is better that the works then the words should witness it. We may also by this assure our selves, that wee haue done nothing so secretly to the flocke of Christ, but it is knowne, and the name of God be praised for it: for as euill deeds remaine to the graue, so good works redound to perpetuall memory.

Secondly, by this wee obserue the excellency of religion, for whose sake it is commendable to forget nature, and praise worthy to forsake our parents and people. Which if we should doe for any other cause whatsoever, we were accursed.

When the Lord would establish his couenant with *Abraham*, hee called him from father and country, to shew that for Religion sake, it is a glory, and not only to doe thus, but also for to be scourged, yea and to suffer death.

Why then is it so contumeliously vpbraided, so scornfully refused of many, and but of few receiued till this day? Among all the world, onely *Abrahams* posterity had the couenant and promises, and now though men be as the sand on the sea shoare, and the starres of heauen which cannot be numbred, yet shal but a remnant be saued, none come vnto it, but by the especiall grace of God, whereby hee draweth them as it were, against their minds: few persons would so resort to *Noahs* Ark, because they scorned his preaching: euen so few are religious, because they count it a base worke, to heare the word of God plainly opened, and sincerely expounded. Where is then become this ancient zeale, that made men and women, as well noble as base, to be obediēt to the calling of the Lord, for which cause they forsooke both wealth, parentage, country, & kindred? but in these dayes men will forsake Christ and his Gospell, religion and preaching for the least of these. Once the Apostle said, he accounted all things as dung in regard of Christ, but now Christ is regarded

*Reu. 14. 13.*

*Gen. 12. 1.  
Leuit. 7. 44.  
Act. 5. 41.*

*Rom. 9. 27.*

as dungue in comparison of the world. Once Christ said, whosoever loueth father or mother, wife or children, house or lands more then mee, is not worthie of me, but now, whosoever loueth Christ more then these, is not worthy to liue.

Once it is said, first seeke the Kingdome of God, and the righteousness thereof; and all other things shall be cast vpon you: but now, first seek the worldes riches and wealth, and Religion will follow too soon. Oh what miserable dayes are wee fallen into, where ignorance aduanceth it selfe like a smoake, and is not ashamed, the Gospel reuiled by euery Atheist, the Ministers molested of euery Papist, the Sacraments prophaned, the professors rearmed by slanderous titles, which for Christs sake haue lost their kindred, and aduentured their liues. Surely, surely, some great plague is approaching, for the quenching of this burning heate of sinne, when they shall say, there is a God that rewardeth the righteous, verily, there is a God that iudgeth the world.

10 Thirdly, we obserue out of this verse, that wee must not without consideration giue liberally to all, but with speciall fauour to doe good to the godly: for you see Boaz telleth this second cause of her forsaking both Country and kindred, as if he were bound to doe for such as for his owne children, thereby signifying that if wee haue neuer so much to giue, yet wee can neuer giue inough to the Saints of God: This our Sauiour signifieth when he saith, There were many widowes in Israel in the dayes of *Elijah*, yet to none was he sent but to *Sareptah*, a City of *Zidon*, to a woman a widow: as if hee had said, as God with speciall kindnesse relieved her in the three yeeres famine, euen so must wee with the like fauour succour the godly laboring poore. Therefore when *Paul* biddeth doe good vnto all, hee addeth especially to the houtholde of faith.

This is profitable for our dayes, that wee might also learne to whom we may giue, for now our land is full-

*Lut. 4. 16.*

27.

*Gal. 6. 10.*

full of wandring and roging beggers, who as their life is most base, yet their manners are farre worse: First, they worke not at all, but are idle, and hee that worketh not, must not eate, because hee walketh inordinately: Secondly, they are for the most part, vtterly void of all feare of God, Atheists, ignorant persons, blasphemers, prophaners of Sabbathes, disobedient to Magistrates and Masters, common-whoremasters, and Whores, hauing almost euery weeke new husbands and wiues, thecues and such drones as sucke away the Almes from poore labouring persons. They will pray at euery dore for any simple reliefe, with their hattes on their heads, most vnreuerent, but if any man appeare before them, they will presently break off their prayers, and vncover their heads, esteeming more of the presence of a feely man or woman, then of the maiesty of the eternall God, if they bee not satisfied, they will curse more vehemently, then before they praied earnestly. Those are the poore which get our almes: but for other, I heare of few, for I speake nothing but that which I haue heard and seene with my own eyes. And to speake nothing of their changing of their voice, their counterfeiting sores, & their common drunkenness: I thinke I may euery way conclude, they are the Caterpillers of our Country, the Cananites of our common wealth, the vngodliest and vnprofitablest members among vs.

For whom I haue two suites, the one to the Magistrates, that so often as they finde such persons, they would duely execute the law vpon them, that the other may beware: and my other to the people, that they would bee deafe at their cries, and shut vp their compassions from them, and bestow it vpon the poore labourers among vs, to encourage them with patience to endure their trauels, and to discourage the other from this kind of wicked life. Whatsoeuer you giue this is but seede cast into the Sea, whereof shal neuer come any profite, but those that are of the house of the Lord, let vs wish them prosperity.

11 *The Lord recompence.* This is the second part of this reply of *Boaz*, which is his prayer for *Ruth*: wherein, as we shewed you, are deliuered two things: first, that the Lord would giue her some reward: secondly, hee comforteth her, in that hee telleth her, shee is come to trust vnder the wings of God. Where, first of all here seemeth some hold for popish merites, seeing he prayeth for a recompence, and perfect reward. Therefore it may bee probably gathered, will they say, from hence, that works after faith merite grace: for here I cannot conceale the subtilty of our English Papists, which they learned from the Romish Seminarie, being asked whether works merite, they answer no, meaning those workes which goe before faith, whereas they euery one doe confidently belieue that workes after faith doe merite eternall life. Thus they blinde our eyes with the Schoole distinction of workes before faith, and after faith, that they might the better couer their sophistry, but we (praised be God for it) most confidently affirme, that no workes eyther before or after faith, do concur in the matter or cause of iustification. As for workes before faith, wee acknowledge they are sinne, for whatloeuer is not of faith is sinne: and for workes after faith, we constantly beleue with *Paul*, that our saluation commeth not by them. But let vs come to this Scripture, and continue a little with our saluation-workers. We grant *Boaz* prayeth for a reward: What then? therfore works either merite, or he prayeth amisse: both which wee denie, and will confirme by this Scripture. First, did *Boaz* thinke, that *Ruth* had merited by this forsaking of her Country? I answer no: why then doth hee pray for her? if shee had deserued it, God is not vniust, but he that commandeth that the hire of a laborer should not bee kept backe one night, would not, nor needed not to be entreated for that, which he must of necessity performe. By the which we see, that the prayer of *Boaz*, the merit of *Ruth*, and the iustice of God cannot stand together.

Secondly,

*Rom. 14. 29*

*Rom. 4. 2*

*Gal. 2. 16.*

*Eph. 2. 6.*

Secondly, for what cause doth hee pray for a recompence? Was it not because shee had forsaken her own idolatrous people, to come to the Lordes common wealth? yes verily, it was so. Then was it of faith, or of workes? no worke assuredly, but faith: for faith caused *Moses* when hee was growne vp, to forsake the Court of *Pharao*, and to ioyne himselfe with God his afflicted people: Faith caused *Abraham* to come into the land of promise, from his owne idolatrous country: and this same faith caused *Ruth* to come from the Country of *Moab* to the people of the Iewes, and therefore *Boaz* addeth, that shee was come to trust vnder the wings of God, but confidence proceedeth of faith, and not of workes. Therefore to conclude, *Boaz* prayeth for such a reward, as God had promised to all the faithfull: for as the sunne looketh vpon the earth, and the earth looketh vpon the sunne again, so faith respecteth the promise of God, & the promise of God regardeth faith; because it is written, whosoever beleueth in me hath euerlasting life, but whosoever beleueth not (though hee purchase lands for Catholikes, build Churches, ordaine Chanteries, and go neuer so far on pilgrimage) yet is he condemned already.

12 But now they will renew their wonted outcry, saying, We preach for faith, wee condemne works, wee driue men to a wicked life, and tell them all is well, if they belieue well, wee condemne say they, housekeeping, giuing to the poor, with builders of Colledges & Churches, and founders of Hospitals, with all charitable actions. These are great thunderclaps, but yet without raine. I aske the resoluest Papiſt liuing where euer he read any of these, in al the writings of the Protestants once mentioned without singular commendation: for I am sure none of you that are resolute Papiſts will come to the Churches to heare our Preachers speake against them, yet you crie out, belieue them nor, they broch heresies, that is brought vnto you by your pensioner hangbies, and luke-warme Professors,

Heb. 11. 2.

Heb. 11. 8.

Iob. 3. 18.



papistical! Atheists, which come to our Churches to sleepe, and there dreame, who being come vnto you, make you belieue that their dreames were the Preachers sermons, & you that are apt to belieue lies, belieue lyers. But to come to the purpose, you accuse vs for condemning good workes, when we attribute no merites vnto them: this we denie, for the reason is like this: None will become a Papist, but hee that hopeth to bee Pope.: So none will doe good workes, but hee that hopeth to bee saued or crowned by them. If they grant the latter, then they must giue the former: which I am assured many honest minded Papists would not bee, though they might haue as much as the Popes father, the Diuell offered Christ, which was all the World. Therefore as a Papist is not a Papist, because he would be a Pope, so good workes must not be done, that men might be crowned by them. Euery Catholike which beleeueth as the Church beleueth, must not presently steppe into *Peters* chaire: no more euery one that doth a good worke, must by that ascend vppe into heauen. Good workes haue another vse then to iustifie. Because the eye cannot smell, shall it therefore bee pulled out? no, it was created to see, and not to smell: because good workes iustifie not, shall no man doe them? God forbid, they were giuen to the faithfull, for outward testimonies of faith, and of God his spirite, that by them, they might assure themselves and others to bee sanctified and elected: not that they should helpe in their saluation. As the tree dyeth without the Baie, and fire is nothing without heate, so workes without faith, and faith without workes, is cursed and vnprofitable.

Therefore wee say, let euery one that calleth on the name of Christ, depart from iniquity, eschew euill, and doe good, feed the hungrie, cloath the naked, visite the sicke, and imprisoned, harbor the harborles, prouide for children and widdowes, yea, and builde Churches and Colledges, for the maintenance of God

his

his worship and learning. Yet we say, wee are iustified by faith, we haue peace with God through our Lorde Iesus Christ, by whom wee are brought to this grace, through which we stand, and glory vnder the hope of the glorie of God: for all the works in the world can not satisfie for one sinne, because there is none other name vnder heauen, by which wee must be saued, but onely by the name of Christ.

13 Out of this, first we gather the goodnes of God, which of his owne promise and owne mercie, accepteth that little obedience of faith, which we offer vnto him. What can wee doe to the fulfilling of the law, if wee keepe all, and yet faile in one, we had lost all our labour: but if we keepe one point onely, and faulted in the rest, it were like to a man that was bound to pay ten thousand pound, and should offer a shilling: but we keepe none, and yet hee accepteth vs in the death of his sonne, that our righteousnesse might abound to euerlasting life. Now the vse of the mercy of God is, that hereby wee should bee made more fearefull and carefull not to offend him: not as some imagine, that hereby is giuen the greater liberty to sinne, because the Lord speaketh peace vnto vs in his beloued Christ: for this is as the Prophet speaketh, being escaped out of a ditch to fall into a snare, and as a man which is drawne out of a riuer should cast himselfe into the sea. But the regenerate must be more afraid to offend the mercy of God, then the vnregenerate at his threatening iudgements. They will not sinne because they loue God, the other will abstaine for feare of punishment: the promises of the Gospell terrifie them more then all the terrors of the Law: for they finde a sweeter comfort in the presence of the spirit, then to rest in all the gardens of pleasure, when they finde access to the throne of grace, through the blood of Christ, and by him all their infirmities couered, their petitions granted, their sinnes remitted, and they at peace with God, like ioyfull men discharged from euerlasting imprisonment, they walke in holy-

Rom. 5. 1.

2. 3.

Rom. 5. 22.

1/2y. 24. 18.

nes and righteousnes before him all the dayes of their life. Oh that these mercies would sinke deeper into our hard harts, that the force of the cogitation of the bloud of Christ, might both soften and mollifie, purge and cleanse them from wauering and doubting, wantonnes, and presumption, and prepare our fallow grounds fit to recieue the Lords owne seed, his euerlasting word, which is able, to saue our soules.

14 Secondly, by this when he saith, vnder, whose wings thou art come to trust: the dignity of the faithfull is commended vnto vs, for they liue vnder the wings of the Lord: which is a Metaphor or borrowed speech, comparing him to a hen, which couereth her chickens with her wings; shewing vnto vs, that then wee are in safety, when wee are couered with the winges of the Lord. This our Sauour noted when hee said, That hee would haue gathered the City of *Ierusalem*, as a henne gathereth her chickens. This dignitie of the faithfull, is by many such speeches manifested in the Scripture, wherein the Lord sheweth vs the care hee hath for our safety, when he calleth vs the apple of his eye. Hee sheweth his loue, when he calleth vs his children, his brethren and spouse, to teach vs our duties, he calleth vs the branches of a vine, which are good for nothing, but to bring forth grapes; euen so are the godly pleased with nothing which they doe, saue onely the worship of God. This consisteth in the holy fellowship which the faithfull haue with God, which *David* saith, bringeth life for euermore, with whome is a Well of life, and the fulnesse of all ioy. And in another place the Lord saith. Behold I stand at the dore and knocke, if any man open, I will come in, and suppe with him and hee with me: and *Iohn* saith: Hee that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the father and the son. Here is the comfort of the spirit that dwelleth in vs, the assurance of faith which ouercommerh all the world, the euidence of our saluation, euen the confession of the Gospell with the mouth, and the beleeuing in the heart, the hearing of it when it is preached, and praying

*Mat. 23. 37*

*2. Job. 9.*

*1. Job. 24*

praying in the assemblies of the faithfull, for wheresoeuer are two or three gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them, saith the Lord, for he dwelleth among his Saints, the Arke is with his ministers, the couenant or tabernacle of presence with them that feare him for euer more. Oh, who will not be drawne to be the member of Christs owne body, the heavenly Temple for the holy Ghost to dwell in, the sincere professor of true Religion, that they may haue both the Father and the Sonne. Who will not open to the Lords knocking, that hee may receiue the King of glory for his guest? Finally, who would not forsake the shadow of all the trees in the world, to be couered vnder the wings of the Lords presence? Where is more comfort to be found but one day, than a thousand yeers in all the thrones of Maiestie.

15 Thirdly, and lastly, by those words, as is noted the dignity of the faithfull, so on the contrary it vttereth the desperate and comfortlesse estate of the wicked, namely, they are like vncouered birds also, that neuer are shielded with the winges of the Lord: they lie open and scattered, subiect to all the foules of the ayre, euery minute in danger to bee torne in peeces by the hellish and internall diuels.

Therefore *David* saith, howsoeuer they be Nobles, and Princes of the earth, and haue houses and possessions after their owne names, yet they stand but in slippery places, so soone as they moue they fall. Our Sauiour saith, They are like a man hauing no wedding garment: so soone as the King espieth him, he is cast into ytter darkenesse. *Paul* sayeth, they are strangers from the life of God, so that being liuing, yet they are but condemned persons, which euery howe looke for the tormentor, & then to be burned in euerlasting fire. Oh fearefull estate of all Atheists, Papists, Idolaters, Iewes, Turkes and Pagans, carnal men and hypocrites, despisers of the Ministry and Gospell of Christ, who, as in this world, they are without God, so in the world to come, shall be seperated from his presence, with the

*Psal.* 73. 18.  
19.

*Mat.* 22. 13  
*Ephes.* 4. 18.

Diuell and his Angels. Looke on your reckonings, you guilty consciences, which euery day adde thousands to your former iniquities. The greater your debt is, the sharper shall bee your imprisonment. The oftner you are warned, the more shall bee your stripes. As none were saued but those that entred into the Arke, so not one of you shall euer see the face of God (except at your condemnation) vnlesse you become zealous professors, and heare our Sermons, bee partakers of our prayers, and as obedient to the voice of the Gospell in the mouth of his Ministers, as if there were a law of present death, to bee executed on you for euery default.

26 *I find fauour.* This is the second part of the speech of *Ruth*, wherein she thanketh *Boaz*, and excuseth her selfe. Shee thanketh in the first words, when she sayth: *I find fauour in thine eyes, Oh my lord, because thou hast comforted me, and hast spoken those things which are to the heart of thy handmaid.* For shee confesseth his courtesie and thankfulness, by the verditte of the learned in the humble confession of a benefite. Shee excuseth when shee sayth, *I shall not be as one of thy maidens.* As if she had said, I am vnworthy of this courtesie, because I come to labour for my selfe, not for thee, as these thy maidens doe. Out of which wee obserue these things.

First, a holy example of commendable thankfulness much accepted of God and men, as vnthankfulness is abhorred by heauen and earth, we haue examples herof in many wicked persons, as *Laban* his discourtesie to *Jacob*, *Saul* vnto *Dauid*, and the wicked *Ammonites* to his Ambassadors: To speake nothing of *Pharaohs* Butler vnto *Ioseph*, of *Nabal* vnto *Dauid*, and also the inhabitants of *Keilah*: which being famous in the scripture for the enemies of God, so are they branded with this note of vnthankfulness, as if it were an especiall fruit of vnrighteousnesse. And truly this is most worthy to be vrged in our sinnefull age, for the children forget their duties to their naturall parents, the people tread their

Gen. 21. 2.

1. Sam. 19

10.

2. Sam. 10.

1.

Gen. 40. 25

1. Sam. 25.

10.

1. Sam. 33.

12.

their Preachers vnder their feet, for telling them the truth, we alwaies remember what wee haue giuen, but forget what we haue receiued : whereas it is a token of the best nature to forget what wee haue done to other, but to remember what we haue receiued : surely, vnthankfulnesse towards God, and towards men neuer rained or raged more. Toward God, for the continuance of his Gospell, peace, and welfare of our countrey, toward men, ingaging the benefites that are dayly bestowed, by casting in the teeth, as if they were deserued. The heathens abhorred this wickednes, and the heauens will raine down destruction vpon these thankelesse persons, as they did vpon *Sodome* and *Gomorrah* for the like offence.

Secondly, by this we gather, that the praiers of the righteous are more acceptable to the godly, the giuing or taking of almes. For when *Boaz* promised *Ruth* this kindnesse, shee thanked him, and no more: but now, when hee prayed for her to the Lord, shee protested, that hee comforted her, and that he had spoken those things which were to the heart of his hand-maid (that is) which pleased her exceedingly well. As if shee had said, I am bound vnto thee my Lord for thy kindnesse; but thou hast comforted me more with thy prayer then with that: So that here for her selfe, and for al the godly, she protesteth, that of two benefites she was most of all comforted by his prayer: which noteth in her, a more lingring and thirsting after righteousness, then after all the maintenance of this present life: for whosoever drinketh of that water of worldly welfare, shall thirst againe: but whosoever drinketh of the water of faithfull prayer shal neuer thirst any more. This one consideration made the blind men of *Iericho* crie so importunately after Christ, saying, Iesus thou sonne of *Dauid* haue mercy on vs. Some heavenly benefite they looked for, earthly he had none. And this teacheth vs, that when we giue, we should also pray for blessing vpon our beneuolence: for *Salomon* compareth the giuing of almes, to the casting of corne into a moist

*Iuc. 17. 27.*  
28

*Vers 10.*

*Iob. 4. 14.*

*Eccles. 11. 1.*



*Iam. 2. 15.*  
16.

a moist or fruitfull land, so as the husbandman prayeth for a blessing vpon his seed, euen so he which giueth to the poore must pray for a benefite vpon his beneuolence. But if any gather by this my speech, that it is sufficient to pray, and not to giue to the poore, I answere, This Scripture condemneth this folly, when it saith. If a brother or sister be naked, and want meate, & thou say vnto him, goe warme thy selfe, and feede thy selfe, and yet giue them nothing, this is a dead & damnable, not a liuing and sauing faith: of these kind of people the world is full, which say, alas, God helpe you, God prouide for you, God giue you patience, but nothing commeth from them, saue onely faire wordes. To whom we may say, as a begger once did to a Popish Bishop, desiring a peece of money of him, were it neuer so little; but the Bishoppe said no, he would giue him a pardon, to whom the begger replied, I perceiue if your pardon were worth any thing I should not haue it: euen so, if the prayers of these people were any thing worth, they would not giue them, because they giue nothing.

17 Lastly, by this verse, when *Ruth* excuseth her selfe, that she should not be as one of his maidens, she setteth downe a true example of Christian simplicity: for it may bee shew thought that *Boaz* was deceiued in her, that he might think she came to worke for him, and not for her selfe, therefore she telleth him plainly that she should not be as one of his maidens, that is, as one of his hired seruants. So that these wordes of *Ruth* tend to her owne hinderance, if *Boaz* had bene deceiued in her, yet godlines will not conceale that, which maketh against it selfe, if the question be made of profite. Whereby we note, that encroching for bargaines, facing for promises, suing for counterfeit titles, & such like actions cannot agree with the simplicity of a godly minded Christian, whose conscience is his Court, his religion his attorney, & the word of God his iudge, to pronounce definitiue sentence against his own cause, if it tend to the perill and damage of his neighbour, or discre-

discredit of his profession. Oh that we had more of this simplicitie, and lesse of this subtiltie, whereby wee deceiue our owne soules, betray the glorious Gospell of Iesus Christ, confound the weake mindes of our waue-  
ring brethren, make shipwracke of pure consciences, and cast our selues headlong for the world into the fire of hell.

18 But Boaz said. This last verse sheweth vnto vs, that Boaz was not deceiued in Ruth, but shutting vp the communication, by calling her to meat, and dealeth to her so abundantly, that she leaueth some. By the which words there is noted two degrees of the kindnesse of this man. First, that in his owne person he calleth her to meate. Secondly, that with his owne hands he gaue her abundantly. Where we see againe and againe commended vnto vs the humilitie and liberalitie of this Boaz, he disdained not to call so simple a guest to his table, knowing her to bee a faithfull sister; for whose sake, if need were, he was bound to lay downe his life. Whereby we are instructed to cast off the statelinesse of our stomackes, standing vpon our pantoples, scant vouchsafing to looke friendly on a poore man or woman, much lesse to speake kindly to either of both. Againe, his liberalitie, by giuing so plentifully vnto her with his owne hands, it appeareth he was none of these counterfeir giuers, which promise much, and performe little, and for euery carnall companions tale-bearing, and whispering, withdraw their promised and bounden liberalitie, from Church and poore, from Minister and Religion. Oh how cold is this deuotion, which proceedeth from a sudden humour, and soone endeth to God his dishonor: better had it beene for those men, not to shew any fauour at all, then after they haue rashly begun, causelesse to withdraw their beneuolence from Christ. But I consider, there shall be some that shall say at the latter end vnto our Sauour, we haue prophesied in thy name, wee haue eaten in thy presence, and yet he shall say vnto them; *Depart from me yee workers of iniquitie, I know you not*: then shall they be blessed,

fed, which haue wasted their wealth for Religion, consumed their liuing on the faithfull, and continued their liberalitie vnto the end. Now let vs giue praise to God.

## The seuenth Lecture.

*Ruth.* Chap. 2. verse, 15. 16. to 24.

- 15 *And when she arose to glean, Boaz commanded his servants, saying: Let her gather among the sheaves, and doe not rebuke her.*
- 16 *And let fall some of the sheaves for her, and let it lie, that she may gather it up, and rebuke her not.*
- 17 *And so she gleaned in the field till euening, and shee threshed that which she had gathered, and it was about an Ephah of barley.*
- 18 *And shee tooke it up and went into the Citie; and her mother in law saw what shee had gathered, and shee tooke forth and gaue vnto her, of that which she had left, when shee was sufficed.*
- 19 *Then her mother in law said vnto her, where hast thou gleaned to day? and where wroughtest thou? Blessed be he that knew thee: and she shewed her mother in law with whom shee had wrought, and said, the mans name with whom I wrought to day, was Boaz.*
- 20 *And Naomi said to her daughter in law: Blessed be he of the Lord, for he ceaseth not to do good both to the liuing and to the dead. Again, Naomi said vnto her, the man is neare vnto vs, and of our affinitie.*
- 21 *And Ruth the Moabiteesse said, he said also certainly vnto me, that thou shalt be with my servants, untill they haue ended all the haruest which is mine.*
- 22 *And Naomi answered vnto Ruth her daughter in law: It is best, my daughter, that thou goe out with thy maidens,*

*dens, that they meete thee not in another field.*

- 23 *Then she kept her by the maides of Boaz, vnto the end of barley haruest, and wheate baruest, and dwelt with her mother in law.*



Hese Verses vnto the end of this Chapter, contain those things which *Boaz* and *Ruth* did, with *Naomi* also after that *Ruth* had dined. The words haue two parts. The first betweene *Ruth* and *Boaz*, in the field. The second betweene *Ruth* and her mother

in law at home.

The first part is in verse 15. 16. 17. wherein is set downe what *Ruth* did after dinner: *That shee arose to gather eares*: which is declared by the time, verse 17. and the quantitie in the same verse, *An Ephra of barley*. Secondly, *Boaz* renueth his commandement to his seruants for *Ruth*, wherein he willet them, first that they suffer her to gather where shee please, verse 15. Secondly, that they willingly let fall vnto her out of the sheaues, and suffer her to take it vp.

The other part of *Ruth* and *Naomi*, is contained vers. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. and declareth what these twaine did after *Ruth* came from the field, and after her coming home, vers. 18. bringing both her gleaned corne, and reserued visuall. They twaine commune of those things which *Boaz* had done to *Ruth*. First, *Naomi* asketh *Ruth* where she had gleaned that day, vers. 19. To which *Ruth* answereth, telling the name of the man, in whose possession she had gathered, to be *Boaz*, ver. 19. Secondly, his courtesie toward her, not onely for that present, but also biddeth her to abide with his maides vnto the end of his haruest: after this, *Naomi* first praieth for the man, vers. 20. alleadging his kindnesse, not onely to them that are liuing, but also to those that are dead, and telling *Ruth* that the man was her kinsman. Secondly, she couiselleth *Ruth*, vers. 21. that shee take his proffer, and abide with his maidens, for feare shee  
be

be denied in another field: which *Ruth* performeth, vers. 23. and keepeth with them to the end of barley haruest, and wheate haruest, and afterward with her mother. Of these parts let vs briefly speake, as the Spirit shall assist, and the time permit.

2 *Then she arose.* After dinner like one carefull of her busines, she repareth to her former worke, and heere by the way this question may be made, whether *Ruth* gaue any thanks to God for her meate, seeing it is not mentioned: for this doubt must not bee omitted, nor passe vndissolued, lest our carnall companions in this age, which come and go to their meat like brute beasts, may seeme to haue the example of some godly persons, for the defence of their abominable vnthankfulness. To which I answer: first, if any godly person haue at any time, omitted his dutie, we must not by his example be drawne to do the like; for we must liue by the rule of the word of God, not by the examples of the faithfull. Secondly, we must know that euery thing or circumstance is not needfull in euery place of the Scripture to be declared particularly: for in this place we reade not that *Ruth* gaue any thanks to *Boaz* for her meate: yet we must not conclude that shee gaue none at all, and if she thanked a man, much more the eternall God, which framed his mind to shew her that fauour. Thirdly, she being with *Boaz*, it was his dutie at his owne table to pray, and to giue thanks, which no doubt but he did, and she did with him. Therefore to the words, where we first note the true vse of eating and drinking, the benefits of God, which is, that by them we may be enabled to follow our vocations: For heere we see, *Ruth* after meat, returneth to her worke againe, as if the holy Ghost had flatly set downe, that for this cause we must eate and drinke, that by them we might worke more freely, and labour more diligently. Therefore *Salomon* pronounceth a blessing vpon a whole country, *Whose Princes and Nobles eat for strength, and not for drunkenesse*: and these are accounted two sinnes of Sodome, *Idleneesse, and fulnesse of bread*, that is, eating

*Sccl. 10. 17.*

*Ezek. 16. 53*

eating and no working. This point can neuer be stood enough vpon, that the belly-gods, and vnorderly persons of our age, might be periwaded therewith to leaue their drinking and drunkenesse, their eating and gluttony, and their playes and pastimes: for the meate is no sooner out of their mouths, but the renewing of their sport entereth into their hearts, how they may spend more time in idlenesse and vanitie. And aboue all, this is profitable for seruing-men to note, who wish nothing but libertie, and their owne consciences know, that if they may chuse, they will dwell with no masters, but where they may doe little worke; therefore came the old prouerb, a yong seruing-man, an old begger; because vnthriftinesse in youth is seldome worne out in age. This I speake not against that calling, which no doubt but is good and lawfull, but only to warne them and exhort them, to banish their vntimely eating and drinking, and to put away idlenes, with some lawfull and profitable busines: and let vs all be *Ruthes* in this point, as in other her conditions, that we may eat our bread in the sweate of our browes, and rise to labour, not to pastime, that we may remember our old curse, which came by reason of sinne, and ease the contagion of our diseased natures, with the daily following our honest vocations.

3 Secondly, by this also may we vrge (although the holy Ghost in this place speaketh uot of it) the worship and obseruation of the Sabbath: for as men goe from worke to meate, and after from meate to worke againe: euen so reason would, that as we sanctifie the Sabbath in the fore-noone, by preaching and hearing, the after-noone should be hallowed with the same exercise. But of all workes, this the greatest is in smallest reputation: for men go from hearing to their meate; but from their meat, either to sleepe, or to open prophaning the Lords day, with most execrable and accursed pleasure or negligence. They say once a day is enough, yea, and too much also, except they did it better. Such clipping of God his seruice to satisfie our pleasures,  
will



will not stand with the least and the smallest point of Christianitie. And this they may be assured of, that in the last day, their owne diligence and weekely labours, in worldly busines, shall stand vp in iudgement against them, to condemne their negligence in the trauaile of godlines: yea and till this slacknesse bee amended, the time lost and past repented, they shall neuer come to the knowledge of God or his truth, themselves, or their owne saluation: for he that sanctifieth the Sabbath, hath all Religion, but he that prophaneth the Sabbath, hath none at all.

4 And Boaz. In these words Boaz renueth his commendement to his seruants concerning Ruth, which we shewed you was vttered in the ninth verse: and now he willeth them, that though shee gather among the sheaues, yet none should shame her: meaning, none should reprehend her; for reprehension to a godly and modest woman, is a matter of blushing or shame: And this is to be noted, that his minde is, though she deserued blame, yet none of them should say, blacke be her eye, (as the prouerbe is) that is, once accuse her for any fault. Where we note the wonderfull care that Boaz had of her, that the longer he looked on her, the better he liked her: her solitary bestraiour, her contented trauaile, her diligent order in going so orderly to her businesse againe, were as orations or perswasions, to make him, being godly, to approue and commend her about all the residue. Which teacheth vs, that we should be haled on with the same cords of honestie, diligence, and Religion, to extend our liberalitie in large gifts and courteous speeches, to euery poore person that wanteth our helpe: and that the rather, considering paueritie is a curse of sinne, wherein we are all as guiltie as they: therefore like feeling members of our brothers miseries, where wee see the foresaid graces appeare, there let our bounden beneuolence excell, that they may be encouraged with our benefits, and we may bee comforted with their prayers, and both conioyned in this life, and in the life to come.

5 Secondly, *Ruth* would not gather among the sheaues, because, no doubt, she was studious to auoid offence, for if she had so done, she must needs incurre the suspicion, though not the reproofe of misbehaviour, coueting more then was her due; for the eares, and not the sheaues were appointed for the poore. Whereby we note that the poore must be caretul about many things, they abuse not the libertie of the rich, although they may go without correction to the sheaues in the fields, or the heapes in the barme, yet they must not eate vp more then becomes them to aske. Now it were without conscience to aske so much as the owners cannot giue, without shortening of their hands to other their poore brethren. And this condemneth the raking desire of them, which are neuer contented; and those vngodly robbers and theeuers, which aske, and yet haue no need: both which kinde of people will to the vttermost craue, and haue all a mans possessions, without any mercie, vnder pretence of pouertie, yea, and will neuer accept the willing minde of them that are not able to giue, but like the sea, gape for the water out of the little land-brookes. These are officers and bribers, extortioners and vsurers, rackers of farmes, raylers of rents, takers of fines, and defrauders of simple persons in bargaining, who all are condemned in the last commandement, as the couetours of other mens goods; and therefore guilty of eternall damnation.

6 And do you. These words are the second part of his commandement, whereby the former point is confirmed, that *Boaz* knew *Ruth* would not pick the sheaues, and therefore willeth to let fall on the ground plentifully, for her to auoid her further and more vnprofitable labor, which he thertore doth, that he might testifie his goods to be not onely his, but all theirs that feare the Lord: for no doubt but there were many that did gleane in the field beside *Ruth*, with whom *Boaz* did not thus deale; shewing vnto vs that there may be a difference in giuing, and that wee are not bound to giue equally to all, but as the persons are, so must bee the gift,

Gen. 43. 34.

Cap. 45. 22.

Gal. 2. 10.

the poorest must not haue the greatest share, but the godliest, for pouerty without godlines is like the apple of *Sodome*, which is as faire to looke on, as any other, but being taken in the hand, resolueeth to smooke, and powder; so if vngodly poore folkes be a little examined, they shall be found as the apple not worth the eating: so the other not worthy to be giuen to, although they crie like the horse-leaches daughters, giue, giue, yet we must answer them with spare, spare, but *Barz* doth in this place, as *Ioseph* did to his brethren, he tasted all of them, but *Beniamins* part was five times so big as the residue: afterward he gaue to euery one change of garments, but vnto *Beniamin* he gaue three hundred shakles and five change of garments: the reason of all this was, because he was *Rachel* his owne mothers sonne, but all the other were his fathers children only: euen so must we do good to all that are our fathers children by creation, but to our mothers children, which is, the Church of Christ, the household of Faith, whereof *Rachel* was a type: we must with speciall portions, for feeding their hunger, and clothing their nakednesse, compass their wants, with the supply of our beneuolence: for which cause Saint *Paul* in his preaching was willed by the other Apostles, to haue a speciall and heedfull care ouer the poore brethren; which if it were put in practise, we should be more able to do good vnto the godly, and to deny the contrary minded. This one thing is aboue all other to be required, that euery one giue where God may most of all be glorified, but the vngodly sort take their reliefe, as the hungry hounds their feeding, if they be hindered, they will flie vpon their owne masters, in like sort the wicked will blaspheme God liberally, and not humbly thanke or praise him, for any thing they receiue. What if they murmure against thee, and say, my part is not so good as thine, you giue him more then to me, and you care for none but these precise fellows? Tell them againe, it is lawfull for thee to doe with thy owne as thou wilt: neither ought thy eye to be euill, because my hand is good: the vnworthiest in the

the world, shall haue the worthiest portion: they which with them are last, with thee let bee first, and the first with them, be last with thee; for spirituall men must looke for spirituall hearts, to cast the seed of their alms into good ground, where the fruit may be encreased, the want of the faithfull may be releued, the glory of Christ may be magnified, thy owne dutie may be discharged. A good conscience satisfied, and thy soule for euer comforted.

7 Secondly, By this we obserue that *Boaz* might haue admitted many hinderances, whereby hee might haue beene better aduised before he gaue such large liberty, either to *Ruth*, or to his seruants for her, as to gather among the sheaues, or to let fall handfuls vnto her. He might haue thought thus with himselfe, it was lately a dearth for long time together, it may bee shortly the Lord will send such another, and then all that I haue will be too little for my selfe and my family, and therefore I must be wise, and giue not so much, till I know what I shall lacke, but all this could not turne away the heart of *Boaz*, from doing good vnto *Ruth*, for he esteemed more of one godly *Ruth*, then of all the possessions he had: neither ought any of the godly once to admit any such doubt in their minde, as to bee vexed in distrust of the mercy of God to come. They must pray with *Dauid*, *O Lord incline my heart to thy testimonies; and not to conuentiones.* The widow of *Zarephtha* might haue answered *Elisha*, that shee had but so little left, as would onely suffice for one meale, and giue him nothing, yet shee was obedient, and beleued the word of the Prophet, and her store encreased, that shee wanted no more.

The Church of the Macedonians might haue said, that they were poore Saints as well as the residue, therefore as they asked nothing, but were content with their pouerthe, so none should charge them in giuing to other, but yet the Apostle *Paul* said, they supplied the want of the Corinthians, and gaue them more then they were able. And euerlasting is the commendation

*Psa. 119. 36*

*1. King. 17.*

*2. Cor. 8. 2.*

*3. 4.*

2. Tim. 1.  
16. 17. 18.

which he giueth of *Onesiphorus*, how often he refreshed him, and was not ashamed of his chaines, but came to *Ephesus* and visited him there, and followed him to Rome many hundred miles, that there also hee might succour him with his charitie: which teacheth vs, when we haue to deale with the godly, as all these persons had, no cost must be spared, couetousnes not admitted, no feare of want suspected, for he which is the Lord ouer all, is also rich vnto all.

2. King. 28.  
13.

*Obadiah* in a famine fed an hundred Prophets, yea and hid them in caues, from the wrath of *Iezabel*. What want did he sustaine thereby? surely none, for distrust causeth want, and not liberalitie, for he which maketh thee to feed his Saints now, will also prouide another to feed thee when thy store is wasted. Oh hearken to this you possessors of the earth, vpon whom in this time of dearth the eyes of the poore do looke vp, as on the hands of the Lord, whereby he filleth euery liuing thing with his plenteous goodnesse. Open your gates wider, that more poore may come into your houses, to bee refreshed with bread; open your purses farther, that more beneuolence may come out, to bee cast into the fruitfull land of the famished poore, for after many dayes you shall finde it againe, put on the bowels of compassion, and let not your owne Brethren want, seeing you haue enough. Hee that willeth you to doe this for his sake, will command heauen and earth, to restore his owne debt, which you haue lent him: feare not that you shall want, for the Lord is the owner of the earth, and this is sent vpon vs to trie your charitie and compassion toward the poore for his sake: if you now be liberall. *Paul* hath prayed for you, that you may finde mercie in the day of the dissolution of all things, and the Lord hath promised to the mercifull mercie, at that day when hee lieth sicke vpon his death-bed: Make you treasure of this worldly wealth, and send them by the hands of the poore into God his kingdome before you: spare not the sheaves in the Barne, the eares in the field,

nor

nor the heapes in your Garners: for hee that spendeth for the members of Christ, shall receiue the greater aduantage. Remember you are the partakers of the same Faith, which they had that sold their possessions to giue to the Saints, and to gaine heauen: but you neede not to sell any lands, onely deliuer your corne plentifully to the poore: which if you doe not, they shall rise in iudgement against you at the latter day, because they spared neither lands nor liues, and you will not giue a little Corne for the name of Christ.

8 *And so she gathered.* This is the last part of that which *Ruth* did in the field, shewing her diligence shee vsed in her labours, by working out the whole day vntill the Euening, and gathering an Ephah of Barley: for by this appeareth, that shee laboured as faithfully for her selfe and her mother, as if shee had beene an hired seruant, or her mother looking vpon her. By the which is noted vnto vs, the diligence of children and seruants, in their labours and busines of their masters and parents, for they must not seeke or couet to please them with eye-seruice, but their duties are required, as well in the time of their absence, as in their presence.

Be *Ruthes*, my beloued, in this point, whosoever are bond or free; for they which are faithful in a little, shall be made great Rulers, and they which haue not beene faithful in the earthly treasures, shall neuer be trusted with the heauenly. By this also they may learne, which thinke they may lawfully take their ease in their owne busines: but we see by this example of *Ruth*, that Religion bindeth vs to be as diligent in our owne, as in another mans trauaile, committed vnto vs vpon trust, for as to him wee are faithful, because wee receiue wages, so in our owne wee must bee painefull, lest the Lord arise against vs for the mis-pending of our time, we owe more dutie to our heauenly Father, then to all the earthly masters of the world.

9 Againe, the quantitie of her gathering is here de-



Leuit. 19.

26. and 27.

16.

Exod. 16.

16.

scribed to be an Ephah of barley: for the vnderstanding whereof, wee must note that there were three kinds of measures among the Hebrewes, which are mentioned in the Scripture: the first was a Homer, which was the measure of Manna that the Lord allowed to euery household, when they were wandering in the wilderness, and contained of our English measure, six pintes, and somewhat more; the second measure was a Hin, which after our measure, contained ten pintes, and somewhat more, the third was an Ephah, which is this that measured the barley of *Ruth*, and it contained ten Homers, which cometh to sixtie pintes, which being diuided by eight, amounteth to the quantitie of seuen gallons and one pottell, which is a bushell lacking one pottell, after our English measure. By the which wee may obserue, how largely the Lord provided for *Ruth*, by the liberalitie of *Boaz*, for she gathered more in one day, then otherwise she could in two or three: where the Lord himselfe sheweth vs how she tooke the courtesie of *Boaz*, and the seruants scattered for her according to their masters commandement, that her hand might be quickly filled, her trauaile the more easie, her labour better rewarded, and finally, mother and daughter bee both more comfortably refreshed with their kinsmans kindnesse.

10 And when she tooke vp. The day being ended, and *Ruth* wearied with her vnwonted, and yet diligent trauaile, vp she taketh her bundle of corne, and the scraps of meat she had reserued, and trudgeth to her mother, that she might vnderstand of her good happe, and they both together reioyce for the corne *Ruth* had gathered, and the good will which *Boaz* had offered. Out of the which we may first of all obserue a heauenly and godly example of obedience and loue toward her mother in law, for we see in this place, that she doth not onely labour for her liuing, but refresheth her with that which was giuen her to satisfie her owne hunger, while she was in the field in her diligent labour. Was it not sufficient for *Ruth* that she had left her people and country

country to come with her mother in law, but she must also goe for her, shee sitting at home, in a poore and contemptible manner to gleane in the field : or if shee did that willingly, yet must she saue the meate from her owne mouth, and put it into *Naomies* ? Heere wee see shee failed in nothing that might either commend her loue, declare her obedience, and signifie her care toward poore and old *Naomi*, her deare and godly mother. And this teacheth vs, that wee must be *Ruthes* to our aged parents : wee must labour abroad, and they must tarry at home, wee must set our nimble bones to the heauy businesse, and their wearied bodies must rest in the houses. It is vngodlinesse to say, that the old man or woman, shall labour and care for our wretched riot, and carelesse expenses, but rather let the yong gallant take his owne parents vpon his back, cary them from their house of trouble to the harbour of peace. Let *Esau* and *Jacob* hunt venison for *Isack*, for he is old, and must tarry at home. Let *Jacob* and little *Ioseph* tarry in their Tents, and the lustie youthes his sonnes and brethren lie in the fields and keep their fathers sheep, and rather then old *Jacob* should goe, let yong *Ioseph* trudge to his brethren, though he be sold for his labor. Let *Ruth* go gleane for *Naomi*, and not *Naomi* for *Ruth*, for this is the first commandement with promise. But oh the gracelesse generations of our vngodly age, where men are become so tender ouer their disobedient brood, that in their labours they will spare their wanton children, and weare out their owne crazed carkases, they had rather put both feet into the graue by their ouer-labours, then bring their vntamed steeres and vnruely heysers, their sonnes and daughters, to the yoke of diligent trauaile. And these gracelesse impes, will looke and laugh vpon their parents, and say, it doth their ould bodies good: And doth it so ? why, is it better for a tyred horse to runne a race, then for a restie palfray ? You are readie enough to catch that which is good from your parents, why take yee not their labours, if they bee to good for them ? No, no,

Gen. 27. 3.

Gen. 37. 14.

you are the heauinesse of your parents? you should bee Oliues: to make them looke cheerefully, but you are Onions that make them weepe bitterly. But yet let not *Ruth*, and the godly exhort vs in vaine, for if we doe the labour, we shall haue their hire, if wee honor our parents, with our actions and deeds, as we do with our words, then shall our daies be multiplied in the land, or else our liues shall bee shortened with vntimely death, and our posteritie rooted out by the iust iudgement of God.

11 Secondly, by this example of *Ruth*, that shee brought her mother of that which shee had left: wee learne this doctrine, if our friendes giue vs liberally, and wee haue plentie, let vs not consume all vpon our selues, but let vs reserue some for other. *Vvhen our Saviour* had twice feasted many thousands, still there was something left, which hee commanded to bee taken vp, shewing vs thereby, if God liberally powre out his benefites vpon vs, it is not that wee should the more riotouslie lauish them out vpon meate or pleasure: for it is a common answere in these dayes, if wee reprove Gamesters for their play, drunkards for their costes, and proud persons for indecent apparell, wherein euery one spendeth more then would suffice two or three poore persons, they will tell vs they spend nothing but their owne, and what haue wee to doe with it? But wee reply, that they spend more then their owne, for the earth is the Lords, and all that therein is. They are but stewards of their goods, and not lords and masters, and therefore they shall giue account for euery penie mispent, when it shall not profit them to say, wee wasted our wealth at dicing and gaming, wee consumed our lands by eating and drinking, and spent thus much money in ~~our~~ apparell, and other brauerie.

12 Secondly, God gaue them those benefites, not so much for themselves, as for others: for as the Sunne shineth not for it selfe, but for vs, the earth bringeth forth

*Mat. 14. 20*  
*Iob. 6. 13.*

forth fruit, not for it selfe, but for vs : so wealthie men, are not wealthie for themselues onely, but for all the poore members of Christ, that they might liberally bestow vpon others. The Heathen King *Assuerus*, making a feast to all his Empire, yet hee gaue this law, that none should bee compelled to drinke or to eate more then they needed or pleased : so abominable is gluttony, euen in nature, that it hurteth man, spoileth beastes, and killeth the fruites of the earth ; for the ranckest corne is none of the best. Then heere is temperance by this example commanded : For the Physicians say, that it is most wholesome to come and rise from meate with an hungrie stomacke : and the word of God saith, that we must eate for strength and nature, not for appetite and drunkennesse. But oh that our fat *Basanites* would admit this as a wholesome and a godly doctrine, then wou'd not their bellies and paunches grow so great as they are, nor their hearts so hardened against the poore ; for their dogges should goe empty, their abundance would be minished, their gluttonies and drunkennesse banished, their pleasures and delights expelled, and their pride and apparell be humbled, and their godly and needy brethren succoured.

13 Thirdly, by this we note, that the poorest must strue to bestow somewhat vnto their brethren that want, yea though they spare it from their owne necessities : but especially children to their parents, and one kinsman to another : for thus wee see *Ruth* doth, shee spared when shee had enough, and that shee gaue to her mother that wanted. Which godly kindnesse putteth vs in minde of the poore widow in the Gospell, that came and gaue two mites into the Lords treasure, and the Lord doth greatlie commend her for it, aboue the rich offerings of the wealthie : as if a little thing that a poore man doth, were more accepted then the multitudes of rich men. Indeede to the world the largest gift maketh the greatest shew, but to the Lord the little portions of a wil-

Ester 1. 8.

Luke 21. 2.

ling mind, if it be but a cuppe of cold water, is greater then the flesh pots of *Egypt*, and all the daintie fare of the King of *Babylons* Court. For our Sauour encourageth vs by this meanes that they which haue little to giue, should not abstaine, but certainly know that the Lord looketh on the heart, not on the hand, on the minde, not on the gift, for that which in the presence of the world is despised, in the sight of God, is best accepted. Therefore euery one must looke to deale some good by their liuing, be it neuer so small, for as there is no hearb, but it yeeldeth some fruit, so there must be no man but hee must giue somewhat, that so he might fulfill the glorie of the Gospell.

14 *But her mother in law.* Here in this verse *Naomi* seeing the plentie of the gleaned corne, and reserued victual, like a godly woman falleth to prayer for a blessing vpon him that had giuen so liberally vnto *Ruth*: which is a thankesgiuing for the benefite receiued, and afterward she questioneth with *Ruth*, where shee had gleaned that day, *Ruth* telleth her in the possession of *Boaz*. Where wee first of all note the dutie of parents to their children, and masters to their seruants which is, to call them to a reckoning where, and how they bestow their time: therefore, saith *Naomi*, where hast thou gathered to day, and where hast thou wrought. Condemning this softnesse and suffering in such kinde of parents, as are afraid to speake to their children and seruants, not for their worke, but for their mispending the Sabbath, the idle iourneyes they make to *Tauernes* and *Playes*, to feasting and dauncing, should be examined by their gouernours, as *Naomi* doth *Ruth*, where hast thou wrought to day? whose businesse was thou employed in? what place did call thee from the seruice of God? and what motion did cause thee to dishonour the Sabbath? No, no, they can suffer them to violate the Lords day in pleasure, that they might drudge all the weeke after in their worldly trauailes. Why doth not some man giue recreation to his seruants of his owne fixe? but they must rob the Lord of the seuenth  
also:

also : How vnequall is this, to put him out that hath but one part, and to score him vp that hath so many. I am perswaded, that of all other tokens of irreligion among vs, there is none greater then this, to suffer our children and seruants to violate the Lords owne day, that they might the more willingly labour and trauaile for them on the weeke-dayes. But yet let the authority of parents remaine, that God hath giuen this power vnto them, and let the duty of children and seruants appeare, that as *Ruth* giueth answer to *Naomi* from point to point, how and where she applied her time; euen so they are bound vpon paine of God his eternall curse, to giue willing and gentle accounts to them, when they are demanded in such like matters.

15 Secondly, by this prayer of *Naomi*, *Blessed be he of the Lord that knew thee*, that is, which approued thee and shewed thee fauour, we note this to be our duetie to pray for our benefactors, seeing wee cannot reward them: so doth *Naomi* in this place, and so doth *Paul* for *Onesiphorus*, that the Lord would shew mercy vnto him in the day of his appearing: teaching vs that our spirituall prayers are more necessarie for them then their temporall benefites are for vs: and therefore let vs learne to pray aright, seeing it is our dutie to pray for our friends. These painted praieres of many, which come from the lips or from wicked hearts, are such as the prayers of rogueing beggars at euery doore for base reliefe, and also the commonest that are among many poore people in these dayes, are abomination in the eyes of the Lord, no benefite to them for whom they are vttered, and the poyson of those that thus doe vse them. Therefore beloued, learne to account of them as they are, cloudes carried about with euery winde, wells and no water, great words, but no grace in them, stop your eares at these bread-prayers, and withdraw your hands from giuing any reliefe to them that abuse this heauenly blessing.

16 Then said *Naomi*. In this verse *Naomi* repeateth her prayer, and addeth a reason of the same, because  
he

2.Tim.1.12.



Ecc. 9. 5. 6.

2. Sam. 9.

11.

Mat. 25. 40

Gen. 21. 23

he hath not ceased to doe good toward the liuing, and toward the dead, that is, hee did good to my husband and children when they were aliue, & now to vs their posteritie, they being dead, for doing good to vs for their sakes, they doe it to them; for either interpretation will stand. For we must not imagine, that this liberalitie doth any good to them that are dead, because they were in Moab, these in Iuda, they were consumed in their graues, and vnfit for any beneuolence, as for their soules they needed no earthly beneficence: for that remayneth true for euer which *Salomon* saith, the liuing know that they shall die, but the dead know nothing, nor yet haue they any more part, seing their remembrance is forgotten, the thing which they loued, and the thing which they hated, and the thing they desired is now perished with them; neither haue they any more part of all the things that are done vnder the Sunne. By the which we may see the delusion of them which teach vs to buy prayers and pardons for our friends that are dead, that their paines may bee eased which now they endure: for if nothing can profit them that is done vnder the Sunne, then neither our praiers nor our purses, can giue them any reliefe. But by these words we learne, that if we doe good to the children, and widowes, of our deceased friends, it is all one, as if we did good to their owne persons. Thus said *Naomi* in this place, and thus *Dauid* did good to his friend *Ionathan*, being dead, when he did kindly entreat *Mephibosheth* his Sonne, being aliue. The Lord himselfe protesteth in the Scripture, that he did good to the Israelites and Iewes, for *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Iacobs* sakes, and our Sauour in the Gospell declareth, that the good we doe to the least of his Brethren, being on earth, we doe it to him which reigneth in heauen, for this is the dutie of true friendship, to make much of our friends when they are departed, to be a friend to their friends, and to be an enemy to their enemies, as the Lord promised *Abraham*. Therefore, let vs cast away this counterfeit kindnesse, and performe this godly loue, where-

in

in others before vs haue walked, and as wee were wont louingly to receiue the Parents, being aliue, so let vs ioyfully entertaine the children now they are dead, for true friendship loueth at all times, and godly kindnesse must neuer be remoued. As we wish that others should vse vs when wee are gone, so let vs vse others now they are absent.

Pro. 17. 17.

17 *Moreover Naomi said.* In these words shee giueth comfort vnto *Ruth*, shewing her, that his beneuolence was not causelesse, seeing hee was neare vnto them, and of their affinitie, being an appointed person to redeeme their inheritance. For, in the Law of the Lord, hee hath decreed for the poore of the Iewes, that if any person had sold his inheritance, the next of his Kindred might redeeme it, and restore it to the Familie againe, which comming into the minde of *Naomi*, shee hopeth that by this meanes they should come to their inheritance againe, seeing *Boaz*, who was one of the next of her Kindred, had so courteously entreated the Widdow and Heire.

Ier. 25. 25.  
Deu. 25. 5. 6

Whereby wee note the great care that the Lord hath ouer the poore, which by a Law decreed, that they should not for euer bee deprived of their inheritance, for at the farthest they should come to it againe, at the yeare of Iubilee. And truly this Law being ceased, because the Iewes Common-wealth is ouerthrowne, yet the Lord executeth the same in some measure amongst the Gentiles daily. For now wee may see and heare, how hee exalteth many from the dust, to walke and sit with Princes: how hee giueth great possessions vnto them whose Fathers had not one foot of Land, and casteth many from their vnlawfull Titles. And euery day wee heare of some cast downe and humbled, and others lift vp and exalted. Who doth this? but the hand of the Almighty, that putteth downe *Haman*, and raiseth vp *Mordechai*: refusethe *Saul*, and chooseth *Dauid*: remoueth *Abiathar*, and establisheth *Sadoch*: banissheth *Shebnah*, and aduanceth

*Eliakim*:

*Eliakim*: and finally, that in few ages changeth all things: Therefore promotion commeth neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the wildernesse, but from the throne of the Lord of hoasts, which openeth, and no man shutteth, humbleth, and no man setteth vp, exalteth, and no man casteth downe, and ruleth the course of all mankind by his vnchangeable decree. Let not then the mightiest be proud for their honor and dignitie, for the Lord destroyed the Anakims great Princes and Giants, before the family of *Caleb*: much more will he do those that are lifted vp by their wealth, that should rather cast them downe: and let vs doe good to those poore brethren among vs, for they shall be lifted vp to riches, when the greatest and wealthiest among vs shall be cast downe into pouertie. But in this matter we shall haue more occasion to speake in the fourth Chapter.

18 But *Ruth* said. In this verse *Ruth* maketh relation of these things which *Boaz* said vnto her, praying for a blessing vpon him, because he vouchsafed to take her into the company of his maidens, and gaue her leaue to gather to the end of haruest. So that in this place by these words of *Ruth*, wee haue an example of perfect thankfulnes, omitting nothing that might serue to commend the kindnes of *Boaz*: and also of woman-like and godly modesty, that concealeth the cause of all this courtesie, which was her owne commendation, as already we haue shewed you. So that it is no part or point of godlinesse, to do as our euill conditioned and ingratefull persons doe, which omit that which serueth most for to commend their benefactors, and to lay all the praise vpon their owne deserts. But *Salomon* willed that another mans, and not our owne mouth should praise vs: and most vngodly it is, when men will not in so ample manner confesse the benefits they haue receiued of other, but by all meanes extenuate them, which maketh men vnwilling to doe any good, because they can haue no thanks for their labour. And this it is that caused couetousnes and bribery, extortion and vsury,

vsury, to enter vpon their bodies and wealth, that would not gratifie with kinde and deserued reports. So that now men will please themselues with money and rewards, that would haue beene satisfied with thankfull words: which is a iust iudgement vpon the world, that would not be contented to recompence kindnesse for kindnesse, and are now plagued with couetousnesse for kindnesse.

19 *Wherefore Naomi.* This is the last part of this conference or Dialogue, wherein *Naomi* counselleth *Ruth* to follow and take the proffer of *Boaz*, and abide with his maidens, to auoid all dangers, if the reapers deny her in another field. Where wee first of all note, that if we acquaint our parents and friends, with our actions and enterprises, it might go farre better with vs in the things of this life, for their aged counsell which they haue bought with much experience, may stay our vnsteddy minds with their approued aduice: *Ruth* in this place, declaring the courtesie of *Boaz*, hath it confirmed with the counsell of *Naomi*, and grounded vpon a reason which shee knew not, nor feared not. For shee thought, that in euery place she should haue found the like entertainment, and the reapers that then were, would so continue to the end of haruest, but *Naomi* knew they were often changed, and so in the end it might fall out otherwise, then *Boaz* appointed, or *Ruth* expected. And this (mee thinketh) doth shew vnto vs what manner persons parents ought to be: for if children want counsell, they should be aduised by their parents: if comfort, it should be ministred by parents: if necessities, they should be provided by parents: if instruction, they should be guided by parents: and finally, if correction, they should be ordered by parents: which is not onely to be wished, but is required of the Lord, that they bring them vp in the feare and nurture of the Lord. And if this were duely weighed, and reuerently considered, as *Elishas* cloake parted the waters of *Iordan*: so this would part a sunder, and breake off many thousand mariages in our daies, where parents

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Ephef. 6. 2.

are not able to counsell, nor willing to be counselled, which if they would, they had not beene married. This I speake, not to the discredit of marriage, but onely to exhort, as from the Lord, that those which either are, or intend to be married, would looke or trauell first for wildome, and then for wiues, first for vertue, and then for husbands, wherein, if they follow my aduice, I assure them their marriages will be much merrier, and their posterity much happier.

Gen. 34. 7.

20 Secondly, by this we gather, that it is a dangerous or indecent thing, for women to trauaile or worke alone without any company, for the weakest are soonest oppressed, and women are quickly conquered. We know *Dinab* trauelling alone, was taken and rauished by *Sichem*: and *Abigail*, when shee went to pacifie the wrath of *Dauid*, tooke seruants with her, as in this place *Naomi* counselleth *Ruth*, to abide in the company of the seruants of *Boaz*, accounting it an indecent & vnseemly thing for women and maidens to be seene alone. And truly, if seruants in our dayes had many times more company, there would be lesse dishonesty among them: for we know and see to our grieve, that the daily and visuall familiaritie of a few, hath bred some disease in our Church, and distemper in our Common-wealth. This I speake, that euen in these dayes of peace, men would be more carefull ouer daughters and seruants, and not to employ them so commonly as they doe, in iourneyes, and trauaile, and solitary businesse, but for more assurance keepe them with company, which may bee their defence against all dangers, if any happen, and the auoiding of dishonestie, if any be so lightly disposed.

21 Thirdly, and by this we note, that company were best for both kind of youths, either yong men or maidens: when *Naomi* saith, *It is good for thee to go forth with his maidens*: that is, thou art a woman, and abide among his women and maidens; for all companions are neither fit nor lawfull, maidens among men, and men among maidens, is for many causes disallowed. First, because

cause there is no such equality in the sexe, that they might keepe together: for if they labour, it is not alike, and if they sport, their pleasures are contrary, and if they dally, it is flat iniquity. In consideration whereof, in old time the wiues had one tent to dwell in, and the husbands another; as we may see in *Abraham*, in *Sara*, in *Jacob* and his wiues; and like this it is that *Miriam*, and the women of *Israel* praised God by themselves after their deliuerance out of *Egypt*, and *Moyse* and *Aaron* her brethren, with all the men of *Israel* by themselves. and also we know, how the virgins of *Israel* went vp euery yeare into the wildernesse, to lament and talke with the daughter of *Iephtha*. Whereby we are taught, that not only for feare of danger, but also for modestie and conscience sake, we must auoid this mingled companies of men and women, except in necessarie occasions, as prayer priuately and publickly, communication of godly pretended mariages, and such like businesse. Whereby also we see at once condemned the feasting, dancing, meeting, playing, and running of men and maidens together, without all respect of honestie and modestie. And that which is worst, parents and masters will behold their pastime, and delight in the vanitie of their wanton children, trayning them vp in a dissolute life, and commending their indecent and vnseemely behauour. Amend this negligence in the shell of infancie, and your children will grow vp to your greater comfort, and prosper to their more happy welfare, and the occasion of many sinnes will be cut off, if we follow the counsell of the Spirit of God.

22 And *Joseph* abode. This is the conclusion of this chapter and second part of this history, shewing vnto vs that *Ruth* followed the counsell of her mother, abiding with the maidens of *Boaz* to the end of barley & wheate haruest, & afterwards dwelleth with her mother again: where wee obserue another example of obedience in *Ruth*, that harkened to the voice of her mother, & went forth with the maiden of *Boaz*. And surely it is commonly scene, that such as the mother is, such is the

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Gen. 18. 30.

Gen. 31. 32.

Exo. 15. 20.

Judg. 11. 37



*Iob. 1. 5. &  
4. 22. 12.*

daughter: for more *Naomies* would make more *Ruthes*, and moe good mothers would make more good daughters: And in these dayes all the faults of children may iustly bee imputed to the folly of parents, as the olde crabbe goeth, so goeth the yong, and as the old cocke croweth, so croweth the yong: a Serpent hatcheth a Serpent, not an Eele: so euill parents bring forth euill and vngodly children; but good fathers, by diligent instruction and tender admonition, by praying with, and for their children, as *Iob* did, shall liue to see their generations as blessed as his was.

23 Secondly, by this we learne an excellent example of godly liberality, in that *Boaz* suffered *Ruth* to gather wheate, as well as barley, the best as well as the meaner. In like manner must wee as willingly depart with, for Christs sake, our wine as our water, our drinke as our drasse, and as we commonly speake, our white as our browne: and truly in this, many good men offend, not because they giue it not, but because they thinke it too much to giue, as if our best gifts were not best accepted in the presence of God. He which fed the Israelites with Angels food, would also that we should feed him in the godly poore, with our worshipfull and daintiest fare. This I speake not, that those which aske, should be discontented with the meanest and fittest for them, for the prouerbe is, beggers must not bee chusers, as it is couetousnesse not to vouchsafe the best we haue, (it need require) to the poore, so it is scornefulnesse for the poore, like the Israelites which loathed *Manna*, and desired flesh, to be discontented with their necessarie and present food, and to lust for that which is aboue their vocation. But the vse of this point is, to perswade to bee like minded vnto *Boaz* in this, to the godly poore, that we euery one, without partialitie or grudging, when necessitie requireth, giue our gold, as well as our siluer, and distribute our dearest almes to our poorest brethren.

24 Thirdly, Haruest being done, *Ruth* abideth with her mother in law, for none of the godly will make a daily

daily and continuall trade of asking almes, or forsake their owne parents or poore habitations, for worldly respects, as appeareth by this example of *Ruth*. For it is no doubt, she fared well euery day with the seruants of *Boaz*, and much better then her poore mother could prouide for her at home, but shee is not drawne away therewith, but is as contented to eat the hungry morsels with her mother at home, as the plentifull abroad. And it is great pitie any should be succoured, which are not contented to liue hardly at home, and then to aske, when there is no other honest meanes left to liue. And this condemneth the common walking-mates, which haue neither houses nor honestie, and it is greatest pitie that they should be either succoured or suffered so to do, for they are drones which neuer come in hiues, but to the hurt of other; they waste all, but get nothing, neither haue they any other care, but to charge the godly and charitable people. Vnto such giue not, as we haue often said, for they which will not liue of the sweate of their browes, let them not eate of the bread of our labours. Now let vs giue praise to God.

## The eight Lecture.

*Ruth*. Chap. 3. verse, 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

- 1 *Afterward, Naomi her mother in law said vnto her, shall I not seeke rest for thee my daughter, that thou mayest prosper.*
- 2 *And now, is not Boaz our kin/man, with whose maids thou wast, behold he winnoweth barley on the floore this night.*
- 3 *Wash thee therefore and annoint thee, and put on thy clothes, and goe downe into the floore, and let not the man know thee, untill hee haue made an end to eate and drinke.*

- 4 But when he lieth downe, marke the place where he lieth : then come thou, and uncover the place of his feet, and lie downe, and he shall tell thee what thou shalt doe.
- 5 And shee said vnto her, whatsoever thou hast commanded me, that will I doe.
- 6 And so she went downe into the floore, and did altogether as her mother in law had commanded her.



His third Chapter is the second occasion of this mariage, wherein *Naomi* especially dealeth with *Ruth*, how she should make knowne her sute to *Boaz*. The whole Chapter hath these two parts : first, the counsell of *Naomi* to *Ruth* : secondly, the effect of that counsell. The counsell is contained in these sixe verses now read, consisting also of two parts, first, her care for *Ruth*, vers. 1. that her desire is to procure her prosperitie: secondly, the meanes whereby *Ruth* might performe that which shee aduised : first, because *Boaz* was then alone in the floore winnowing of barley : secondly, she must prepare her selfe to go to him, first, in her body by washing and annointing it: secondly, in her ornament, that she put on her best cloths, and so go downe to the floore: after she was come thither, she instructeth her, how to behaue her selfe: first by keeping out of his sight and knowledge, till he had supped : secondly, by marking the place of his bed, and lying downe at his feet, and declaring her sute vnto him: and that he would tell her what she should do. After all this, *Ruth* promisseth obedience, vers. 5. 6. and accomplisheth her mothers desire. Of these parts let vs briefly speake, as the Spirit of God shall assist vs, and the time permit.

2 Afterward *Naomi*. In these words is declared vnto vs, the great care that *Naomi* had of her daughter in law *Ruth*, for they are thus much in effect. Now both of vs are in quiet, and peaceable rest at home, yet I see that our welfare cannot alway endure, for I am old, and the graue gapeth after me ; thou art yong, and a good

good mariage carrieth for thee : it is my dutie to looke for thy welfare, and to provide for thy continuall rest, if I be taken away: and being carefull of it, I haue now inuented the meanes, &c. Out of the which we note these two profitable doctrines.

First, that it is the duetie of parents to provide for their children, when themselues shall be taken away, yea, though they haue no certaine assurance, whether they shall need it or not. This we may see heere practised by *Naomi* : for she was neuer in better case since her arriuall at Bethlehem, then she was at this present: Haruest was ended, provision obtained, household furnished, and these two poore widowes liued louingly together, yet then we see in her best estate, she is most carefull for the mariage of *Ruth*. And truely this is required of all them that haue any children, to provide for them, that they should not care onely for their present maintenance, but also for their future commoditie. And this maketh many godly persons to maruell, why men do trouble their houses with their children, when they are able honestly to provide for them abroad. Why then doe many permitte and suffer their sonnes and daughters, to spend the best of their youth in single estate, when it is rather required that while they are yong, they should be bestowed. Truely this maketh so many mariages against the parents mindes, when they are negligent to looke to their children, and then the children provide for themselues. Men looke for offers, as the Marriner looketh for winde, and when the winde serueth, the tide falleth; so many would provide for their children when it is too late. This iniurie is all heaped on the children, they match without wealth or blessing, they are detained in the best time of their daies; and finally, are discredited by their owne parents. Would God, you that are naturall parents would learne of *Naomi*, which was but a step-mother. She deferred not the time, shee knew it a sinne against nature, that youth should bee wasted, and not in marriage, shee had a conscience of her dutie, and a care to

her daughter in law, that her wel-fare might encrease, her solitary life be comforted, her name aduanced, and her Religion rewarded, with a temporall blessing of a godly husband, and eternall saluation in the kingdome of heauen.

Ver. 9.

3 Secondly, by this we gather, that for many causes marriage is better then the vnmarried estate of women, if with the feare of God it be vndertaken. For in this place *Naomi* calleth it rest, as shee did in the first Chapter: and therefore by relation, the vnmarried life is disquietnes, and as rest is better then trouble, so the married life is better then the other. And truely, in the vnmarried life, we finde many inconueniences: First, the heart is neuer satisfied: if a man haue riches, honor, pleasure, health, and fauour, yet wanting a conuenient mariage, he is not at rest, but desireth that. If he be in sicknes, the diligence and care of a wife is better then a Physitian. Nature biddeth him marry to encrease his name. The world biddeth him marry to multiply mankind. The Lord biddeth him marry, to prepare some heires for the kingdome of heauen: So that if Nature, World, and Religion require it, who shall speake against it? Secondly, in the vnmarried estate, is either too too much solitarines, or too too much plesure: the meane betweene both is mariage, where he shall alway finde company to expell sorrow, and ioyfull care to driue away ouer-merry pastimes, it calleth a man to grauitie, it admonisheth of death, it sheweth the world to be vanitie, and hath no hope but in heauen. Therefore *Salomon* speaking of our kind, and alluding to both, saith: He that findeth a wife, findeth a good thing, and receiueth fauour of the Lord: euen so may a woman say, if shee finde a godly husband, she hath a great fauour. Christ taketh greatest delight in his Church, and his Church in Christ. Such is marriage, when the heart of one resteth in another, that is, the rest which is to be required. As for temporall blessings which further it, they must bee sought for by diligent labour, and prayed for by faithfull supplications, because it is  
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Pro. 18. 22.

the Lord that giueth power to get riches, grace to vse them, and his blessing to encrease them. We know, all the Fathers so soone as their child en were growen vp, they willed and wished them to marry, that their minds might first be stayed at home, as it were the foundation, and then their actions would be wiser abroad, which would make a perfect building. But some will say, *Paul* affirmeth, it is not good for a man to touch a woman, that is, to marry. I answer, that saying of *Paul* is because of troubles that are incident to marriage, by reason of the wickednesse of the world. The Merchant that ventureth on the sea, hath greatest gaine, and suddenest losse, nor as if the sea were in fault, but because the stormes fall on the sea: euen so, if any finde their mariages bitter vnto them, let them know, the fault is not in the thing, but in the time, place, or persons: and though troubles follow it, it is but sower sauce to sweet meat: as the furnace doth purge the gold, that their loue might be manifested, their fidelitie tried, their patience approued, and their religion, if they haue any, declared.

1. Cor. 7.

4 Again, they will obiekt, the same Apostle saith in the same Chapter, Hee that giueth to marriage doth well, but he that giueth not to marriage doth better: therefore the vnmarried life is better then the married: to which I answer, first, he speaketh to them that haue the gift of chastitie, but wee know the fewest part are endued therewith: Secondly, his speech is for those troublesome dayes of persecution, when the faithfull were in continuall troubles and feare of their liues, then was it better to die single, then leaue many helpelesse widowes behinde, that they might the better flie in danger, be constant in affliction, and haue no lets or pul-backes, to keepe them from Christ: so he wiseth and protesteth, that their troubles were meanes to keepe them from marriage, in which sense the Apostle calleth it better not to marrie, and yet yeeldeth the other to be good and lawful. But in times of peace, where there is plenty and libertie, the swelling nature will not



be appeased, but only by mariage, where the gift is not, and the Apostle saith, in those dangerous times, that it was better to marry, then to burne, that is, to be vexed with a daily desire, through the feeling of our owne necessitie.

5 Thirdly, they may obiekt that the vnmarried care for the things of God, but the married to please their husbands and wiues : to the which I answere, that marriage hindereth not the seruice of God, but furthereth it in many respects ; first, because a household is a little Church, where the married persons are the Ministers of their familie, by priuate instruction, to draw both children and seruants to the kingdome of heauen. Secondly, it putterh them in minde of the loue of God to them, when they loue one another, and admonisheth them of their duties, which is to loue God againe. Thirdly, they haue moe priuate blessings, as the seales of God his fauour toward them, which also stirreth them vp to serue the Lord. Fourthly, two are better then one : for if one bee negligent in the worship of God, the other may whet his fellowes on : and their prayers are more acceptable, because the number of them that pray is greater ; and if any omit these duties, the fault is in the persons, not in the mariage ; for that is it which the Apostle Saint Paul condemneth, when either partie are so much inclined to one another, that they weigh not the loue of God, and care of heauenly things, for the fondnesse ouer themselves and trauaile for earthly commodities : but wee must bee married, as if wee were vnmarried in this respect, we must vse the world, as if we vsed it not, and reioyce in the company of one another, as if we reioyced not. Therefore to conclude, mariage is honorable in all, instituted by God himself, obserued by the Fathers before Christ, both Princes, Priests, and Prophets, commanded by our Saniour and his Apostles to be vndertaken, that such persons as haue not the gift of continencie, might marrie, and keepe themselves the vndefiled members of Christs mysticall bodie. Let vs then bee exhorted

horted to bee patient in the troubles that accompanie it: for although a bitter shell doe compasse the nut, yet how sweet is the kernell that lyeth within: although it haue as many miseries, as the Winter hath cold dayes, yet vnspeakeable is the comfort of it, to them that are equally minded. And as our labour in innocencie was nothing but pleasure, which now is nothing but sorrow. So marriage was then more sweete, though now for sinne it is become more bitter: but the hardest labour hath some profit, and the poorest marriage hath much comfort. But most accursed are they which for to auoid the troubles they haue conceiued of marriage, doe giue their bodies to most filthy Whooredomes, and wretched adulteries: Of whom Saint *Paul* sayth, That God shall iudge them, that is, vtterly condemne them: for they shall neuer bee made the members of Christ, which haue incorporated them to be the members of Harlots, and Heires of eternall and euerlasting damnation.

6 And is not Boaz. As in the former Verse we haue heard the diligent carefullnesse of *Naomi*, for *Ruth*, to prepare her some rest, that is, a marriage. So now wee are to entreat or speake of the meanes, whereby this might be accomplished, which *Naomi* expresseth in this Verse to this effect. By my daily studie I haue found out a meanes, whereby thou mayest come to more continuall rest, *Boaz*, with whose Maidens thou hast gleaned, and did so curteously entreate thee, hee is our Kinsman and Defendour by the Law, and euen now hee is alone in the floore, winnowing his Barley, to whom if thou wilt goe, and follow my counsell, hee will shew thee the way that tendeth to thy wealth. Out of the which wee gather an example of ancient Nobilitie, how they followed not their daily pleasure, but continuall labour, how they honoured the wealth that God hath giuen them, with the diligent labour of their owne persons: that euen this poorest worke of Winnowing and Threshing, as wee reade of *Gedeon*, was not only committed to their

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*Iud. 6. 11.*

Gen. 38. 13  
2. Sam. 13.  
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seruants, but performed by themselves. Whereby wee are taught that it is no such vnseemely thing as many would make it for men of wealth, to follow their basest labours. This *Boaz* had a Prince to his Grandfather, and he was the Heire vnto all his possessions, yet here we finde him alone winnowing his owne corne. Wee reade of *Iudab* the Sonne of *Iacob*, a Progenitor of this *Boaz*, that he went in his owne person to the shearing of his sheepe : and so did the Sonnes of King *Dauid*, when *Ammon* was slaine by the seruants of *Abolon*, because he defiled his Sister *Thamar*. Examples of this are more plentifull, then the time will suffer me to rehearse, which are left to vs for patternes of thankfulness in their diligent labours, and witnessers of our vnworthinesse in all our possessions. *Adam* could not dwell in Paradise except in his owne person hee tilled it, but many with vs, I thinke would deride him and all their Fathers, if they saw them in any thing but the Gentlemans trade : for being hindered neither by the Magistracie, nor by the Ministerie, they had rather follow Hawking, or Hunting ; Gaming, or Playing, then at any time to soile their hands with their owne labours, but wasting their wealth in vnprofitable pleasure, while they might encrease their substance by godly trauaile. Cast away therefore this Worshipfull idleness, for men thinke nothing maketh them Gentlemen but abstinence from bodily labour, whereas that one thing is the greatest blot to our latest Nobilitie, that they haue cast off the care of their labours to others, applying their time to greater libertie, opening by idleness the passage of all manner of iniquitie. Remember, the fattest Oxe commeth first to the slaughter, when the labouring beast is merrie in the yoke : euen so the idlest bodies are soonest seised by sickness, and consumed by death : whereas labouring persons haue many daies, insomuch as it seemeth a matter of murder, by idleness to hasten the death of our bodies. Therefore, some loathing labour take themselves to licentious riot, and swear out their sickness in vndawfull

full pastimes, but bodily exercises profite little, and will rather in the end procure the paines they most of all abhorre, like the haire of *Abfolon*, wherein he most delighted, with which was wrought his death. But the conclusion of all this is, that those which are the chiefest in spending, should bee the chiefest in working: and the Princes of the possessions, must be the principall in the labours.

2. Sa. 18. 9.

7 *Wash thee therefore.* These words containe the preparation, which shee counselleth *Ruth*, before shee descend to *Boaz* in the floore, that shee wash her, and annoint her: Two vsuall things in these Countries; and the meaning of *Naomi* is, that *Ruth* prepare her selfe in most comely manner to goe downe vnto him, whom shee desired to be her husband. For these actions of washing and annointing, were, and are very common in those places: washing, to scoure off the filth of their bodies; and annointing, to make them looke chearfully. So we reade of *Dauid*, after hee had long fasted for his adulterous child, hearing it was dead, he washed and annointed himselfe: and as *Bathsheba* was washing her selfe, it happened that he saw her, whereby his heart was taken with her loue, and drawne from God at one time. Inſomuch as wee see it an vsual and accustomed thing in these daies the washing of men and women, and for annointing our Saviour speaketh, that when we fast we annoint our selues; that wee seeme not vnto men to fast. Here then wee see *Naomi* commandeth *Ruth* no vnſeemely addreſſing of her selfe, but ſuch as was vsuall, and common among her owne people, and lawfull alſo for her to put in praſtiſe. Whereby we firſt of all obſerue, that comely ornaments, and modeſt addreſſing of our ſelues, either of men, or women, is a thing required of them that feare God, for the outward cleaſing and waſhing away of the filth of our bodies, being the ſauour of ſinne raigning in vs: inſomuch as it is a brutiſh thing to goe in their bodies (as many will) without all reſpect of perſon or humanitie, hands ſpotted, face beſmeared,

2. Sa. 12. 20

2. Sa. 11. 13

Mat. 6. 17.

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countenance disfigured : and their naturall complexion defaced in them, through their daily, vnciuill, and vnaturall behauiour and negligence, who by their cruell labouring to get the world, loose the comfort of their owne bodies, while in swinish attire they wallow in the companie of God and Men.

8 Secondly, by this we gather, that the Lord hath giuen the fruits of the earth, as well for our ornament, as for our nourishment, because it is as necessarie in some respects for the comelineffe of the body, to bee raised vp to handsomnesse, being nourished : as that it should bee nourished being weake. Therefore, sayth *Dauid* : With wine he refresheth the heart of man, and he hath giuen oile to make him haue a chearfull countenance : and in the Verse before, hee sayth : Hee maketh the Grassie to grow for the Beast, and the greene Hearbe for the vse of Man : not simply for the meat, but for the seruice and vse of man. And notable is the Historie of a woman, that came to annoint our Sauour before his death, that powred on him a rich and costli Boxe of oyntment, and he excused her, and commended her for it. And it was an vse in old time, to annoynt the bodies of them that were dead, as we may see how these three women, *Marie Magdalene*, and *Marie* the Mother of *Iames*, and also *Salome*, came to anoint the bodie of Christ lying in the graue. If this was lawfull to bee done to the dead carkasses, much more is it to the liuing bodies of God his Saints.

9 And here by the way we may profitably describe, what is to bee thought of starching, becauie the godly are much troubled therewith : for some thinke it vtterly vnlawfull, some suppose it to bee indifferent, but other imagine it to bee necessarie : and euery one of those doe mutually condemne one an other : Therefore let vs heare the reasons that are brought against it, if they bee waightie, receiue them ; if light and of little force, wee will leaue it to the discretion of the faithfull.

First, they say against it, that it consumeth the graine  
of

*Psal.* 104.  
14. 15.

*Mar.* 14. 34

*Mar.* 16. 1.

of wheat, where of it is made, so that the same which was ordayned for foode, is transferred to an other vse, which is vnlawfull. To which I answere, so was oyle ordained for nourishment, as well as wheat, yet the godly might take that most comfortable Creature, and apply it to the adorning and setting forth of their bodies: which was lawfull for them, and therefore the other for vs, if it bee sparingly vsed. But they will say, oyle was applyed to the body, but this is only in the apparrell, therefore the reason of them is not a-like: To which I answere: that which is done to the apparrell, is done to the body, because it is done for the bodies sake, as we reade of *Izaack*, which smelled the sauiour of *Esaus* garments, that *Iacob* wore when hee got the blessing, and vpon that pronounced his blessing.

Gen. 27. 19.

But they reply againe, and say, it maintaineth pride, and therefore is vnlawfull, but I answere, it is hard to condemne, except wee knew the heart, for that is the Seate of pride, and not apparrell. Againe, if any doe so abuse it, they more offend in that by a thousand parts, then if the thing it selfe were vtterly vnlawfull: therefore the fault lyeth in the persons, not in the manner of addresssing themselues.

But they object againe: That it is a great losse of time, for it asketh much more labour then simple washing: but I answere, so did this annointing, and if the reason bee good against the one, it auaieth also against the other: so that of the three former iudgments, I thinke it in the meane to bee indifferent. And thus in a word, and briefly I haue touched it as a thing not worth any farther handling, and haue vttered my poore iudgement in the same, in the behalfe of them that indifferently vse it, because some haue slanderously giuen out, that none but proude and singular persons vse it, others haue scornefully answered, that none but precise Fooles mislike it. But let vs in the Spirit of meekenesse and gentlenesse neyther condemne them that vse it, nor contemne those that doe forbid it. Neither doe I speake this to perswade any



to imbrace it, whose consciences haue alwayes beene against it: but I charitably desire them, to heare with their Brethren, and in these vnnecessarie trifles, to suffer all the faithfull to enioy their Christian libertie. But especially, let vs learne to praise the Lord, which hath thus carefully and plentifully prouided for vs euery way, outwardly in our bodies, making his Creatures to comfort vs: and inwardly in our soules, giuing his owne spirit to be the earnest of our saluation: that we might want nothing to draw vs away from his Maiestie: but in all thanks-giuing to walke before him in the profession of the Gospell, being compassed about with the helps of this life, as *Elisba* was with the Mountaynes of Angels: that the comfortlesse sorrowes of worldly miseries may neuer driue vs to desperation.

10 *And put thy garments.* This is the second thing which *Naomi* willeth *Ruth* in her preparation to goe downe to *Boaz*, for first as shee commanded her to dresse her bodie: so now shee willeth her to put on her best apparell, as the goodliest ornaments of her body: for we must not imagine, that *Ruth* went naked in the house, although shee bid her put on her apparrell: but her meaning is, that she should put on her best apparrell, that euery way shee might bee furnished to deale with so noble a Personage, and so waightie a cause: Out of the which we note: First, another dutie of humanitie, that if God giue any blessing vnto vs, wee should also be carefull in these bodies of sinne, to prouide for our selues change of apparrell. For we know after *Adam* had sinned, the first thing hee thought on, was somewhat to couer his nakednesse. By the which wee may learne that the first entrance or occasion of cloathing was giuen by sinne, that we might couer the shame of our bodies, for if *Adam* had continued in his estate of innocencie, there had beene no shame of nakednesse, no cause of garments, no feare of cold, or terror of heat, and therefore before all things hee sewed some Figge-leaues together, for the hiding of his offence, but God made them garments of skins. So then we

*Gm.3.7.*

we must be very carefull for the conscience of sinne, that we couer our bodies with outward apparell which indeede is a type, to shew, how our soules must bee cloathed with Iesus Christ. For this cause it was vsuall in ancient time that they not only provided simply a garment for the present necessitie, but many changes for their bodies commodities. And as the world grew so sinne increased, and as sinne increased, the miseries of our bodies multiplied: like a ruinous house that euery day falleth to decay more and more: Therefore, more helps were inuented in the dayes of *Abraham*, then in the life of *Adam*: and more in the time of *Moyse*, then in *Abrahams*, and more in *Salomons*, then in all the residue or former: for as the sore spreads it selfe, so the salue must be lengthened, now the aire is intemperate, the earth vnfruitfull, the bodies of mankinde molested by a thousand diseases, and euery hearbe which was the first mans nourishment, is our surfet; insomuch as the auoiding of all these must be carefully provided by lawfull deuises. Which the Fathers ordained and appointed by long experience, to be not a little holpe by the change of apparrell: And here we see these poore people haue this benefit for their bodies, as well as the rich.

11 Now, because in some the excesse hereof is so great, that they passe all humanitie: and in other the want is so incident, that it shameth mankinde to see their Brethren goe so basely: Some being able, yet like Asses laden with much wealth, they haue no power to bestow it on themselues, or other: Againe, many poore soules, which haue nothing to prouide, or to couer them, are neglected by them that are able: Therefore, in this place wee must set downe some rules out of the word of God, to take away all these extremities. And the first thing that must be knowne, is the cause, for which it is not only needfull, but also lawfull to prouide apparrell, which alreadie we haue shewed you to be the sinne of *Adam*, which wrought in vs the shame of our naked bodies, and brought vpon vs cold and  
heart,

heat, sicknesse and soares, surfets and death, so then the bodies couered by cloathing are made comely againe, are armed against heat, warmed against cold, strengthened against sicknesse, and the dayes of health lengthned, life prolonged, and death auoided: For as the Prisoner looking vpon his yrons, thinketh vpon his theft, so euery one when hee seeth his garments, must thinke on his sinnes. And this one consideration striketh downe all deuises of fashions, or conceits of pride: For alas, what glorie hath the Theefe in his bands, or what profit by their making; for now hee is clogged with them, but anone hee is tucked vp in the halter: so proude persons are now pranked vp, while they looke on their feathers, but anone are payed for their fashions with eternall damnation. For the Lord cryeth out by the Prophet that he will take vengeance of the Princes, and the Sonnes of the King, for vsing strange apparrell.

*Zeph. I. 8.*

12 Secondly, there may be a difference of apparell, one kinde for the rich, another for the poore, one for the Prince, another for the People. One for the Noble man, and another for the Gentleman: for our Sauour speaking of the royaltie of *Salomon* in all his apparrell, doth not discommend it: and wee haue heard already of the apparrell of *Esau*, lying in his Father *Isaacks* house. And this may be also in many Suters, as *Iacob* had sent him by his Sonne *Ioseph*, and *Ioseph* gaue his Brethren to euery one garments, but to *Beniamine* hee gaue fure changes. But some will say, our Sauour biddeth vs not to haue two Coates, and therefore this change is vnlawfull. To which I answere, that it is vnlawfull to possesse change, or varietie of garments, when we see and behold our Brother hath none: therefore our Sauour Christ addeth, that he that hath two coates must giue to him that hath none: So that our abundance must neuer bee to the want and necessitie of our Brethren.

*Mat. 6. 30.*

*Gen. 27. 29.*

*Gen. 45. 22.*

But alas, where is this difference in manner of garments? I speake for the matter whereof they are made:

made: we may make the old complaint of a Christian Father, a thing worthy to bee seene, yea rather to bee lamented: The Maide followeth the Mistris in such brauerie of apparrell, that it is hard to know whether Maide or Mistris goeth formost. Such confusion of degrees, consuming of wealth and goods, condemning the humble, and aduancing of base persons by apparrell into the place of worthy men, is the ouerthrow and destruction of a whole Countrie, the ruine of a Common-wealth, and the defacing of the Church of Christ. But all this while the naked may goe naked still, for any cloathing they can get of these that haue such plenty and abundance: so that men cloath themselves in the finest silks, feede themselves with the fattest Calues, and ease themselves in the softest beds: while Christ in his members is harbourlesse without houses, hungrie without bread, and naked without any rayment to cast vpon him. Oh, woe be to you daintie persons, that thus prouide for your own maintenance, and neglect the substance of the poore: you are cloathed in soft and gorgeous apparrell, and fare deliciously enery day: you cate vp the needie like bread: you are deafe at their cries, blinde at their nakednesse, and like to the *Citizens of Sodome*, vnmercifull to their miseries: consider, that their Eating and Drinking brought brimstone from heauen, with fire to burne vp their Cities and Soules. Consider the end of that rich glutton in the Gospell, which was so tormented in the paines of hell, that he desired but a drop of water, and could not obtayne it. Your brauerie shall bee turned into shame, your pride into paines, your ease into restless trouble, your abundance into euerlasting want, your friends to Deuills, your honour into Hell, your vnmercifull hearts into inufferable plagues, and your pleasures repaid with eternall destruction both of bodie and soule. The like may be said of those couetous persons, which goe as farre vnder their calling as other aboue, and will hardly bestow any garments on themselves worth the wearing, and disgrace the proportion

Ezec. 16. 58

Luc. 17. 18.

Luc. 16. 17.

of mankind through their base apparrell, and vnreuerent addressing themselves, without all respect of Honestic, regard of Religion, Conscience of their places, and knowledge of the true vse of the benefites of God. But many spend all that they can get vpon their bellies, neuer caring how simple they goe in the face of the world, so they haue any thing to couer their nakednesse: and wee know what kinde of beasts are the punishment of such slouthfulnesse. Therefore, let vs euery one helpe those that are not able to prouide, yea, and to buy them apparrell, and let vs all learne hereby, what care wee ought to haue of the change of our bodies, that if we will be ruled by the example of the godly, wee must rather studie and trauaile for our couering, then for our nourishing: Therefore, wee must pray for our cloathing of him that cloatheth the Lillies of the Field, in such measure as wee may bee comforted, our nakednesse couered, our shame abated, our comelinesse adorned, and the sauour of sinne expelled, that we might praise his power for euermore.

13 Secondly, by this we may also note, what reuerence we owe to Magistrates, and to men in authoritie, that we must be carefull in their presence to giue no offence, euen in our apparrell: for here we see *Ruth* going to *Boaz*, an elder of Bethlehem, she is commanded by *Naomi* to put on her best apparrell, as a dutie of all the faithfull, that they make not their presence odious in the sight of their Rulers, and for this cause wee reade in Stories, that when any were wont to come before the Magistrates, hauing any sute vnto them, they were apparrelled with white, which signifieth the innocencie of the person, and puritie of the cause: and also they had one sute, that in all decent manner they might deliuer their minds in the presence of the Magistrate; for the basenesse of apparrell, is loathsome to many. But this shall suffice for the touching of this matter.

14 *Let not the man.* After shee had commanded her to prepare her selfe, she descendeth to instruct her, of  
her



her behaiour: after shee commeth downe to the place: which was this, that shee let not him know of her till he had supped, and were gone to lie downe in his bed, which shee aduertiseth her diligently to marke, and to come and bestow her selfe at his feete. Where it may seeme that *Naomi* counselleth her Daughter an vnlawfull thing, yea, rather to play the whoore, then to get her a husband by a lawfull meanes: for shee bid- deth her to trimme and smoothe her selfe vp, she war- neth her not to come to the man till hee were layd to his rest, and finally, shee counselleth her to lie downe at his feet. Truly, in outward shew it seemeth vn- lawfull, yet in substance very honest, if wee consider euery circumstance. First, I demand, what is it that see- meth dishonest in this whole discourse? Some will say, first, the dressing of her selfe is scant the part of an ho- nest woman, for it is very likely, *Naomi* had this in- tention, by this meanes to draw the old man in loue with her, for shee tooke him as it were at aduantage alone in the floore, and such, saith *Salomon*, is the part of Whoores. I answer, that the Mother of *Salomon* saith, that it is also the point of a Wise and a godly woman to watch in the night, to be finely apparrelled, to cloath her household, and such like. Therefore, seeing an honest woman may doe these things. *Ruth* did no dishonestie in this. Againe, this kinde of dressing in *Ruth* was needfull, because shee had to deale with an honorable man, and therefore the more carefully and comely she must appeare in his presence. But you will say, that *Naomi* had some such meaning, because shee bid her that she should not let her selfe be knowne till the man were gone to his rest: I answer, this shee did, that they might more freely talke together of the matter of her marriage, for if shee had come before he went to supper, the day would not haue sufficed to commune of the cause of her coming, neither would the old man haue gone to his lodging, if he had known a woman to bee present. Then you will say, why did shee not come to his owne house at home, and that in

Pro. 7. 9. 10.

II.

Pro. 31. 10.

21.



the day time ? I answere , because it was a reproch to *Ruth* , to bee knowne to deale publikely in her owne marriage , which must needes bee knowne if it had been done in the Citie, or in the day time : and therefore seeing time and place were now conuenient, the man being alone, they tooke opportunitie by the forelock , and prepared themselues for the aduenture of her marriage.

Why then , will some say , what moued *Naomi* to giue such counsell vnto *Ruth*, seeing she knew it might be defamed ? I answere , *Naomi* knew *Boaz* to bee an old man, not giuen to such lewd and filthy conditiions, but especially shee knew him to feare God , and *Ruth* her Daughter in law to bee a vertuous woman , and trusting in his age, and both their godlinesse , shee is emboldened to giue this aduise. And this may suffice any sober mindes, from suspition of *Naomies* counsell , *Ruths* dishonestie , or the Religion of *Boaz* . But some will say , if the matter bee so cleare as you will make it : then may wee also follow the example and doe the like. To which I answere, if any doe so, it is much amisse : for we must not imitate euery example wee reade of in the Scripture , as that of *Rebeccaes* counsell to her Sonne *Isaac* , whereby hee got away the blessing from *Esau*. There is no cause that can moue vs, as there was *Naomi*, for *Ruth* must be married in her Kindred, wee neede not : shee was bound to one or twaine , but wee are free to many thousands : shee might challenge in her owne behalfe , for the Law of God , but wee cannot doe so except there bee a promise of marriage : therefore neither must wee follow this example , nor yet suspect the actions of either.

15 And *Ruth*. Now the counsell propounded, and the meanes for the execution thereof declared, *Ruth* approueth her Mothers aduise, by promise of obedience, that first shee would doe it, and in the sixt Verse, shee doth performe it. Where wee haue a good example, in the matter of marriage for all Children to depend vpon

upon their godly and religious Parents : If any aske me, whether they be bound upon necessitie so to obey their Parents, that if they offer them Husbands, or Wiues, they cannot refuse them, but their Parents may compell them : to whom I answere, first, if it bee possible, hearken to the voice of thy Parents, but if thou canst not, thy Parents cannot command thee against thy minde, for they must propound it conditionally, not absolutely. In thy body (concerning thy labour) thou must obey them in all things, because they are the Parents of thy body, but thy minde or soule which commeth from God, is alway at libertie. So that disobedience to Parents is the refusing of their temporall commandement, but mariage is euerlasting to the death of man. Secondly, children may refuse, because the Lord many times reuealeth that to the child which he shewed not to the Parents : as we may see in the example of *Samson*, when hee would marrie with a Philistine woman, for his Parents gaine-saying it, the Scripture sheweth the reason of it, because they knew it not to come from the Lord : but *Samson* did, and therefore stood in it, and his Parents hearkned vnto him the end, and got him that woman for his wife. By the which wee gather that no children may lawfully celebrate their marriage without the Parents consent : Secondly, that Parents must be very circumspect to marrie their children : Thirdly, that they cannot in any good conscience denie their consents to their children to keepe them from honest marriage, if there be any equalitie betweene the parties, or hope of honestie in the time of louing. But of this matter wee haue often spoke : and therefore this shall suffice for this time.

Now let vs giue praise to  
G O D.

*Ind. 14. 4.  
C 15.*

## The ninth Lecture.

*Ruth. Chap. 3. verse, 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13.*

- 7 And when Boaz had eaten and drunken, and made his heart merrie, hee went and lay downe beside the heape of Corne, and shee came softly and vnsouered the place of his feet, and lay downe.
- 8 And at mid-night the man was a-fraid, and turned himselfe hither and thither: and behold, a woman lay at his feet.
- 9 To whom he said, who art thou? and shee said, I am Ruth, thy hand-maide, spread the wing of thy garment ouer thy hand-maide, for thou art the Kinsman.
- 10 Which said, Blessed be thou of the Lord, my Daughter, for thou hast performed more kindnesse at the last, then at the first; because thou followedst not yong, were they poore or rich.
- 11 Now therefore, my Daughter, feare not, whatsoeuer thou sayest I will doe vnto thee, for euery one within the gates of my people knoweth thee to bee a vertuous woman.
- 12 Now indeede it is true that I am thy Kinsman, yet there is one nearer then I.
- 13 Sleepe here this night, in the morning if he will doe the part of a Kinsman, let him: but if hee will not doe the Kinsmans dutie, I will doe the Kinsmans dutie, as the Lord liueth sleepe untill morning.



Ow it followeth, in this Scripture to speake of the effect of this counsell, and of those things that hapned after Ruth came down into the floore: and the happie successe she had with Boaz. The words doe easily diuide themselves into two parts, the first respecteth Boaz, the other Ruth.

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The first part concerning *Boaz*, is that which he did after his worke, and before his sleepe, *verse 7.* that hee eate and dranke, and made his heart merrie, and lay downe beside his Corne. For, that he did after his sleepe, *verse 8.* First, he feared when he felt a woman at his feet: and secondly, hee asketh who shee was. After he knew her; he blessed her, *verse 11.* In these words, Feare not my Daughter. His comfort hath two parts: First, his confession that hee was her Kinsman, *verse 12.* Secondly, the counsell hee giueth to her, *verse 13.* To carrie vntill the morning, and then hee would trie her other Kinsman: if he refused, *Boaz* promisseth by oath to confirme her right, and doe her Kinsmans dutie: and therefore biddeth her to sleepe vntill the morning.

The second part which concerneth *Ruth*, is her behauiour after shee came to the place appointed, and hath these two branches: first, that which shee did alone, *verse 7.* That shee came and lay downe at his feet: secondly, that which shee did with *Boaz*: first, shee telleth him her name, when shee perceiued the man was afraid: secondly, shee sheweth him her Petition, desiring him to spread the wing of his garment ouer her, *verse 9.* Of these parts let vs speake in order as they lie, by the assistance of the Spirit of God and permission of the time.

2 And when *Boaz*. These words concerne *Boaz*, and that which he did after his worke, the day being ended and his body being wearied, he went to his meat, eating and drinking, refreshing his stomack, and chearing his heart with these blessings of God which he had present; afterwards getting him to his lodging at the end of his Corne, instead of a softer bed, hee harboureth vpon the straw. Out of the which wee obserue these things.

First, the blessing of God vpon his Creatures, that are moderately taken: for it is said that hee cheered his heart after his Eating and Drinking: his bodie was not only nourished, his hunger abated,

Ecc. 10. 17

Pro. 13. 29.

and his stomack filled, but also his heart was cheared thereby: as if the holy Ghost had said; Here is my blessing vpon meate, that is moderately receiued, that the powers of the soule are refreshed by it: therefore wee reade in the Preacher, that a whole Land is blessed by the moderate receiuing of these benefits in Eating and Drinking. The experience whereof, is plainly proued euery day among vs. For what is the fruit of this immoderate deuouring the benefits of God, but as *Salomon* sayth, the corruption of the bodie, the swelling and rednesse of the eyes, wounds without cause, quarrells and contentions to the woe of many? wherein they that reioyce are voide of all reason, which ought to bee the ground of all their mirth, but like beasts some from feeding to sleepe conuey themselues: other from Eating to Gaming turne their bodies, delighting in nought but vanitie, being as farre from this chearefulness of heart by their meate and nourishment, as *Nabal* was after his Feast, when one word of *Dauids* anger strooke his heart dead. But this *Boaz* was here alone, and none beside him: and yet you see, that in his solitarie Barne, voide of Companions, hee made himselfe merrie, with the fellowship of the blessing of God vpon his meate. Euen so assuredly, if the hands of many could guide their mouthes, their mouthes rule their appetites, and both were gouerned with the Spirit of God, that they receiued for strength to nourish their weakenesse, not for gluttonie to stuffe vp their stomacks, they should with greater comfort sit downe to their meales, and exceeding ioyfully rise vp againe. But seeing our mindes haue as many deuises as our stomacks receiue morsells, wee eate, and yet wee are not satisfied, wee drinke, and yet wee are not merrie, but ouer-come with the good Creatures of God, wee seeke after idle Songs, vaine lesing, and vnprofitable Fables of falshood, and forged conceits in vngodly Bookes, which draweth our spirituall ioy, and plungeth our mindes in the gulfe of worldly

worldly mirth and wofull miserie. Then let vs learne the wisdom of Christ, and looke for ioy which standeth not in laughter, but in the inward comfort of the assurance of the Spirit, being perswaded we feed in the presence of God, we may haue Christ at our temporall and worldly meales, that we may eate and drinke with him in his euerlasting kingdome.

3 Here we see, that Boaz after his labour both eateth and drinketh; for so in ancient time, he did not drinke much that did not eat much. The wicked were wont to be a generation of Vipers, a cruell and vile kinde of Serpent; but now they are no lesse vile, yet they are become Dypsads, and not Vipers only, for they die of thirst, drinking more then they eate. And as the morall is of the Falconer, that while he gazed at the birds on the tree, to shoote and kill them, suddenly a Serpent bit him by the foote, and killed him by her poyson. Euen so is it with these wretches, while they giue themselves to lift their pots, and swill in the destruction of the Lords creatures, the Diuell like a Serpent in that way, giueth their soules mortall wounds. I am ashamed to write, how in this age of the Gospell, drinking ouercommeth all: so that I may say as *Esay 5. 12.* *They are strong to drinke wine, and mightie to sucke in strong drinke.* Yet lest our drunkards should thinke this a vertue, the Prophet pronounceth a woe against them: and no maruell, for saith *Osee 4. 11.* *Fornication and wine take away the hart.* When a certaine prophane fellow boasted of his great drinking, a Heathen man could answer him, that it was praile to drinke much, for Asles and Mules could drinke more then hee, and yet they were not commended for that. It was written of *Darius* vpon his tombe, *Hic iacet qui vinum multum potuit bibere & probè ferre*: Here lies the man, which had no other praise, but that he could drinke much wine, and carry it away. In like manner, the beasts of our time, when they die, leaue no other remembrance of their actions behinde them, for they spoile both the liquor and themselves. For drunkenness taketh away the memorie,



more, dissipateth the senses, and confoundeth the vnderstanding, saith Saint *Augustine*, it maketh of a wife man a foole, of a strong man, a weakling, and of a man a beast: yea, saith Saint *Chrysostome*, whosoever leadeth a drunken life, is vnder the diuell, for drunkenness is a smiling diuell, a sweete poyson, a pleasing sinne, but yet the shame and reproach of mankind. If a woman in times past had killed a King in his drunkenness, shee was not onely acquitted from punishment, but also for her reward, married to the next heire of the crowne. *Ariadne* the wife of *Zeno*, finding her husband so often drunke, at last buried him in his drunken fit, where he miserably perished. Euen so let them perish, O Lord, that delight in drinking more then temperance.

4 Secondly, by this we obserue, that our meat after our labour is much more ioyfull to our hearts, and profitable to our bodies, then if it bee receiued in an idle life: for *Boaz* had wrought hard all this day, and the reward of his labour, is the worke of his meate, which in the end of all, maketh his heart merry. In consideration whereof, the Lord inflicted this as a punishment vpon mankind, that our meate should be vnprofitable, vnlesse it were eaten in the sweate of our browes: for as sleepe to a man that hath long watched, so is meate to a man that hath long laboured, and as the coursing of the Hart maketh him to breath for the water springs: so labour causeth men to hunger more vehemently, to eate more liberally, and digest more effectually their desired morsels. We reade of *Ionathan* the sonne of King *Saul*, when he had wearied himselfe in the slaughter of the Philistims, and being very hungrie, did but dippe the toppe of his batte in a hony-combe, and putting it to his mouth, his eyes receiued sight: so acceptable are the crummes and droppes to them that labour, that they restore the life and power of the bodie, and for this cause the greatest persons in the first and purest age (when the life of man was many hundred yeares) were not exempted from bodily labour. On the other side, as *Salomon* saith, they which  
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*Gen. 3. 19.*

*Psal. 42. 1.*

*1. Sam. 24.  
27.*

fit long at wine, and seeke after strong drinke,; meaning those which with idlenesse follow their bellies, are more noysome to the world, vnwholesome to themselves, and woefull for euer: for their end will bee as the biting of a Serpent, and the stinging of a Cockatrice: teaching vs that laboring mens morsels are most sweete: and if we should ioyfully recreate our selues in the benefits of God, wee must diligently prepare our stomackes in some honest trauailes, that the basest fare may be acceptable meate vnto vs; for the health of the body is preserued by labour, as the planted corne by the diligence of the husbandman: for hee which tilleth the earth is satisfied with bread, but idlenesse is neereft kinsman to madnesse. Against this wee haue often spoken heretofore, and let this suffice for this time.

5 Thirdly, we must note, what manner of mirth or cheerefulnes was this of *Boaz*, it could not be in talking, for he was alone, nor yet in iesting, for the former reason: nor yet was it in outward singing, for it is said his heart was chearefull, as if there were a mirth that were not outward. And truly, where the holy Ghost dwelleth, there abideth this inward ioy. Which proceedeth from it, as a streame from a fountaine, or heate from a fire. *Saul* could bee merry when *Dauid* played on his Harpe, the King of Babylon was merry in the middest of his dilicates, *Assuerus* was merry among his Princes, and *Nabal* was merry in the middest of his reapers: but what maketh the godly merry among the wilde beaſts, ioytull in the dungeons of the earth, and sing heartily when they receiue browne bread? nothing but this ioy of *Boaz*, which is the ioy of the holy Ghost. This maketh men ioyfull in death, merrie in miserie, and leaping vnder the yoke of Christian troubles: which all the Princes in the world cannot do vpon their thrones of Maiesty, this is mixed with no feare, because it proceedeth from so excellent a root. Why do men maruel, that so many godly persons liue so solitarily? the birde had rather be in wildernesse alone, then with thousands  
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Prou. 23. 20

Prou. 12. 7.  
48.Rom. 14. 17  
Eph. 5. 22.1. Sam. 16.  
24.Dan. 5. 4.  
Ester 2. 10.  
1. Sam. 25.  
36.

*Iam. 5. 13.  
Mark. 14. 1*

of her fellowes sitting in a cage, and the godly are most merry, when they are farthest from worldly company. If the godly be a company together, this their ioy must be exprest by singing of Psalmes, as *James* saith, and our *Sauour*, with his disciples, practised this at his last Supper, for when they had done, they sung a Psalme, and went into the mount of Oliues; yea euen then, when Christ had prophesied of his death, and they were sorrowfull, yet this inward and spirituall ioy was not extinguished: wherein we see an excellent commendation of singing after meate, that it might be an outward testimony of our inward ioy. This striketh downe all foolish talking for stirring vp of mirth, and answereth to them that say, if they follow not vaine pastimes, they cannot be merry: Truly that pleaseth the flesh, but displeaseth the spirit: and let them assure themselues, whosoever they bee, that this temporall and wanton sporting, will bring vpon them euerlasting lamenting.

*Amos 6. 5.  
6.*

*Verse 3.*

*Verse 4.*

*Verse 6.*

6 But some will say, is this singing and mirth at tables commendable, seeing the Prophet speaketh so against it? They sing to the Violl, and frame to themselves songs like the songs of *Dauid*, &c. I answer, all curiositie and pleasure in outward singing at our feasting is forbidden by the Prophet, which he doth notably describe in the same place, by these marks. First, when it is vsed to forget their sinnes, and to driue away the terrors of their consciences. Secondly, when it is added for pleasure and ease. Thirdly, that with greedier appetites, they might deuour their meat and drink, to draw away their mindes from the remembrance of the Lord. Fourthly, such mirth as maketh them forget the afflictions of the Church of God, if any desire mirth for these causes, the woe of the Prophet taketh hold vpon them. And surely, heere is condemned all playing on Instruments, and singing at table, when we eate our meat, as a thing, against which the Prophet much aimeth, and is too much vsed among vs heere in England: for nothing maketh vs more readily to forget the affliction

affliction of *Ioseph*, then that doth : when two occasions of mirth are ioyned together, meat and musick, it is like two diuers plaisters laid to one wound, which by their vehement operation, encrease the fore. In like manner, we are more apt to be made worse, then to be amended by the benefits of God. For as too much raine drowne-  
neth and ouerfloweth, and too much drought chippeth and cleaueth the earth : so too much mirth and pleasure ouercommeth the heart of man. This I speake, not to discommend musicke, which I acknowledge freely with all the godly, to bee holy and lawfull : but I exhort and admonish, that it may not be vsed at the present time of eating, but sparingly before or after our feasting. And let vs all chuse rather to sing one Psalm from a feeling spirit, with a grace in our hearts and mindes, then to heare a thousand songs vpon instruments of pleasant musicke, without inward comfort.

7 But I cannot so passe over the merriments and pleasures of men, which are his disciples in the Gospel, that had his soule liue at ease, eate, drinke and bee merry. They haue indeed, with *Boaz*, land and corne, reuenues and riches, but they apply it all to pleasure and merriments. They buy pleasant things for their sleepe, for their watching, for their garments, for their meats, for their oyntments, for perfumes. In their eares are the continuall sound of musicke or flatterers, which they maintaine, in their eyes, nothing but varietie of colours and pleasant things, neuer looking after a poore or distressed Christian : those they permit not to come in their sight, for feare their mirth be hindred. What are their garments but purple, silke, or very rich euery day. For this cause they change their dwellings, and haue variety of houses : as the Kings of *Assur* had Babylon for the Winter, Periepolis for the Spring, Ec-batane for the Sommer, and Susia for the Autumne : so these now in one corner of their Land, now in another, now in the Citie, anone in the countrie, floating vp and downe for pleasure, as if they were cursed vp-  
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on the earth, and might long dwell no where.

8 We reade of the Sybarites, a voluptuous people of Calabria, the selfe-same things that are now in practise in England: first, they were so costly in their feasts, that they were long in providing, and bad their guests sometimes a yeare before. They suffered not a Smith, or any trade which might offend their eares with noise, to tarry among them; and for that cause they kept no cockes in their Cities, lest their earely crowing should awake them. They nourished little dogges, which their women carried about; and when they were disposed to goe into the countrey, they procured them easie Litters or Coaches, and went not so many miles in three dayes, as other doe in one. They would not let a labouring man come into their presence, and they measured nothing which they vsed, except only their water, which they put into their wine. Thus liued the wretched Sybarites, and almost so liue we: so they perished by pleasure, for mirth and pleasure is a Serpent, it will kill if it be nourished; but as the thornes harme not much, being lightly touched, no more doe pleasures, but as thornes, the more they bee grasped and embraced, pricke the deeper, and draw more blood, euen so doe pleasures and merriments which are the ioy of the idle.

9 *He went to lie downe.* Now we are come to the second part of that which hee did alone, which in these words is declared to be the choice of his lodging, at the end or one side of his corne. Where wee note another vsage or custome of ancient nobilitie; in steade of a pallace, they had a cottage, in steade of attenders and waiters, they had the instruments of their labours: and as this Boaz, a heape of straw, in steade of a bedde of downe: such as his toyle and labour was, such is his lodging; an hard worke, an hard bedde; for he that is wearied with trauaile or labour, can sleepe and quietly take his rest on the grasse. And this putteth vs in minde of the estate of all our fore-fathers many yeares agoe, before this softnesse and tendernesse was inuented,

ted, they were glad, wee see, though they were great Lords, yet to be labourers : and although their possessions excelled ours, yet they had lesse bodily ease then we: for the richest and highest estate of dignitie, is not the quietest life. By the which we are admonished, with all kindnes, to harbour the poore and needy, though it be but in a pad of straw, considering they be the images of the ancient nobility, who were contented with the like entertainment : and the poore are exhorted with patience to abide their tedious trauailes, and hard lodgings, seeing the Lords of the world had no better estate, they which had most wealth, had least ease, and wee which haue scant one mans inheritance among twentie, doe peaceably enioy worldly securitie, and truly this maketh vs to feelee, that euery commoditie is tempered with some molestation : the Israelites being deliuered from *Pharaoh*, thought they were well, but then they were driuen to goe through the botto-  
 tome of the sea, and being come to the land of Canaan, they found many enemies, and did not ouercome them all, till the raigne of *Dauid* : so that euery pleasure is mingled with some worldly sorrow : they which vse the sea, get much wealth, but yet with great danger, and they which are on the land, are in safetie, though not in such wealth. And thus must we frame our mindes, that when we enioy the end of our desires, yet it bringeth with it alway some occasion of dislike: therefore it is better to be contented with hard fare, then discontented with daintie cheere, to like in hard harbour, then dislike in the softest beds : and better is a little thing with a quiet minde, then the possession of a kingdome, with the trouble thereof. Which thing let no man accuse or mis-interpret, for (as is already said) *Ruth* obeyed herein the counsel of *Naomi*, & *Naomi* (for my opinion) of God. Yet I wil not strue so much to purge these womē of all blame: for it needeth not, seeing the Saints of God were holy, & better instructed then these, haue had their seuerall infirmities, as are most notoriously knowne. Yet such they were as were worthy  
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of excuse, not of defence, and such is this of *Ruth* and *Naomi*, which if it cannot find so much fauour and charitie, as to be cleared from all blame, yet let it be deemed a sinne of womans frailtie, natures necessitie, and a fault not to bee censured by man, which is so little spotted by the holy Ghost.

10 And *Ruth* came. *Boaz* being weary with his labors, and sufficed with his meat, no doubt but being quietly laid, sleepe had soone taken him: and *Ruth*, when shee had spied a conuenient time, came, and conueyed her selfe softly to the place of his feet, which at mid-night was perceiued by *Boaz*, and not before. For she so laid her selfe, as he being awaked, might quickly spie her: whereby we see the occasion that moued *Naomi* to counsell *Ruth* to come so neere him, which was this, that *Boaz* might first be-griued, and then should *Ruth* best vtter her sute. But of all this we haue spoken before, and therefore to the petition of *Ruth*.

11 Spreade the wing. *Ruth* omitting no opportunity, so soone as shee had vttered her name, shee putteth vp her petition, and by a figuratiue speech, desireth him to bee her husband and defendour. For to spreade the wing, we know is taken from birdes, who keepe their yong ones vnder their wings. And this speech of *Ruth* to *Boaz*, is indeed to entreate him to be her husband: for wee reade the sense of these words to be spoken to *Sara*, by *Abimelech* the King of *Gerar*, that her husband *Abraham* should be vnto her a couer, against all those that would oppresse her. And therefore in ancient time women were wont to bee couered in the presence of their husbands. And *Ruth* said to *Boaz*, spread thy wing ouer me, that is, be thou my husband to couer me: for in times past, it was a thing very odious to be without husbands, euen as odious as to be starke naked, or a masterlesse dogge, as the prouerbe is: Which appeareth by that complaint of the Prophet *Esay*, That ieuuen women should lay hold vpon one man, and desire to be called by his name, promising to prouide their owne liuing. So that this figuratiue speech doth most notably describe

*Gen. 20. 16.*

*Esay 4. 1.*

describē the ductie of husbands towards their wiues. First, the wing signifieth protection, for it is the dutie of husbands to defend their wiues, to be able and willing to shield them from iniuries, prouide for them necessities, couer them in dangers, minister to them comfort and strength in their weaknesse. But truely it is pitie to see what married men wee haue in these dayes, and how little commoditie many helpelesse wiues receiue by their retchlesse husbands, that surely they are driuen with *bigai*, many times to shifte for their owne liues, and the liues of their families. These roysting companions, hastie and headie husbands, which for euery light occasion forsake their families, or wearie their wiues with their presence, minister neither couering nor comfort, according to their bounden dutie, but like periured and forsworne caytifes, that haue falsified their faith to God, the Church, and their wiues, runne headlong to their owne destruction, and decay of their posteritie. Oh how sorrowfull is the estate of women, if they bee not supported with the hands of their yoke-fellowes. Bearing of children is nothing in comparision of this: for that is their deserued punishment of God, but the other, the intollerable hand of the Diuell. Wee reade, that the Pellican will teare out her owne breast to feed her yong ones: but we reade of few so vnkinde, as to feede vpon their young ones, saue onely these vnnaturall husbands. Wee reade that the Storkes are alwayes fedde so long by their young ones, when they are olde, as they nourish them when they were young. But these godlesse fathers care neither for to nourish their little ones being yong, nor how they shall be maintained when they are old.

12 Finally, by this, wiues are instructed their obedience to their husbands, that as the little birde is at the bill of his damme; so wiues must be ready at the becke of their husbands. And let vs looke vpon the brute beastes for example of liues, who in their brutish kinde condemne our humanitie. The Emmet labou-

Psal. 63. 7.

reth and prouideth for winter, that condemneeth flug-gards. The Assie knoweth his owner, and the Oxe his Masterscribber: These condemne vnthankfulnesse to God. The Doves teach vs innocencie, the Serpents wisdom, the dogges watchfulnesse, the Foxes warinessse, the Lions courage, and the little birds our duties to wiues and children. Therefore let vs not bee more gracelesse then these, lest their diligence, like the voice of *Balaams Assie*, condemne our disobedience to perpetuall miserie.

13 *Blessed art thou of the Lord.* Now commeth the second part of the conference betweene *Boaz* and *Ruth* to bee handled, wherein onely *Boaz* speaketh. And first of all, hee blesteth or prayeth for her, saying. *Blessed bee thou of the Lord, for this latter fauour is greater then the former:* Then thou forsookest thy Countrie to come with thy mother in law, but now thou forsakest yong and youthfull husbands, to come to mee a diseased old man: neither wealth nor pouertie can alter or change thy minde, from following the commandement of God to thine owne hinderance, so in this example wee haue an excellent patterne of true and vnfained Religion, which is this: when *Ruth* is obedient to the ordinance of God, euen in that which seemeth to her owne discommodity and earthly consolation: for shee was a yong woman, and therefore by nature desired a yong companion, and not to be troubled with a withered old man, from whom shee could receiue but little bodily comfort: yet becaule by the law she was tied to her neereft kinsman of her deceased husband, forsaking all other, the cleaueth to him, making the law her choice, his age her honor, and the triall of his former courtesie, as bands of assurance for his future kindnesse. This was the faith of *Ruth*, that caused her like *Leui*, to forsake his custome: like *Zacharias*, to depart from his wealth: like the Courtiers of *Herod*, to forgoe their honor, and also the Saints of God to forsake their dearest friends, to follow the voice of the Gospell.

*Luk. 5.28.*

*Luk. 19.8.9*

*Act. 13.1.*

14 And this teacheth vs, to cast off earthly commodities in worldly businesse, to forsake nature and naturall affection, to forgoe life and liuing, and account all things but dung in regard of obedience to the word of God. This is it that toucheth the quicke, and will proue the hart of euery Christian. It this condition were propounded, Christ saith, That for him we must forsake all that we haue: Now, if this law were made, that whosoever went to hearing of the word, should presently confiscate his goods at the pleasure of the Law-maker: Who would in this case be obedient rather to the bare voyce of Christ, then to the threatning words of the law? Examine beloued, and then arraigne euery man his owne heart for this point, and you shal see, whether the loue and desire of the world hath not droue out the loue of the Father. Euery dastard will offer and make shew to fight hardly, till he come to approach the field, but in the face of the enemy, if he abide, there is the triall: nay, if hee see but one way to escape, hee will surely take that, though it bee to his owne discredit: So I feare mee, I feare mee, many, if danger were; would not onely turne from vs, but fight hottely against vs for all their faire faces to vs. They which now will hardly of one hundred pounds giue one to the Gospel, will not then leaue the principall to follow the truth: but as the glare-worme doth not glister but in the night, so true Christians will not be knowne, till the dayes of darkenes and error come, when these dissembling hypocrites shall be found to be nothing but rotten wood, good for nothing. But to come to *Ruth*; she performed her promise to God, as *David* saith, though it be to their owne hinderance: she knoweth it with the *Apostles*, better to obey God then men, to follow Christ and not the flesh, for the world is felie shall be shortly consumed, and then the louers thereof shall be vtterly condemned. Oh, then let vs practise the deniall of our selves before the time of triall come, let vs as the martyrs did, trie the burning of our fingers, before we venture our whole bodies: let vs giue some

*Psal. 115. 4.*  
*Mat. 4. 13.*

of our wealth to the poore now, rather then keepe all to be spoiled by the wicked Apostates then : but how will men do this at the fierie triall, when now in peace they will forsake and forswear the Lord, some for their merchandize, other for rents and reuenues, some to bring the poore *Nabaathes* into destruction, many for worldly profite and temporall gaine: but this Queene of worldly desire, shall one day bee meate for the dogges ; as was *Iezabel*, when it shall bee said, that happie are all you, that in wealth and pouertie haue followed the Sonne of righteousness in sinceritie.

15 *Feare not my daughter.* His prayer and the reason thereof being ended, now followeth the consolation hee giueth to *Ruth*, in these words, bidding her to cast away feare, for whatsoeuer lyeth in his power hee would doe : for the whole Citie would testifie the estate of her person, and vprightnesse in her liuing : and therefore he should be much to blame, if hee denied so lawfull a request. Out of the which wee note.

First, here is set downe the dutie of all Magistrates, which is with meekenesse and gentlenesse to heare the petitions of their suters: for *Boaz* was a publike person, or else *Naomi* had complained to the Magistrate ; but himselfe being a godly Elder, the sure is first priuately handled with him. Therefore they must follow the example of *Boaz* here declared, which is with the kindest words to entreate them, and iust iudgements to proceed from them, alway yeelding to equitie, where the cause is required. For our Sauour accounteth a Magistrate that is contrarie minded, neither to feare God nor to respect man : that is, such a one is hated of God and man : For if Magistrates loue God, or regard their subiects, they must be easily entreated by the voices of their suters. Therefore is that euerlasting commendation of *Moses*, that hee sate in the doore of his tent in iudgement, from euening vntill morning, where all the people might freely haue accesse to his presence, and

*Luk. 18. 25.*

godly conference with his person, the which all the Iudges in Christendome might imitate, without impeachment to their honors. Old *Samuel*, when he had annointed and appointed *Saul* to raigne in his stead ouer all Israel, appealed to the people what iniury hee had done to any, and the people iustified him in all things: now, he was easily comne vnto at al times, when *Saul* and his fathers seruant seeking for Asses, would go to the man of God, meaning *Samuel*. Oh that all that are in authoritie would harken to these examples, that with all gentlenesse they might entreate the people of God, committed to their gouernment, that they might freely come to them, and friendly speake with them, that at the day of their deathes, they might haue the poore Saints of God praying for their deliuerance, their consciences vnburthened; their duties discharged: their subiects satisfied, iustice offered, and their soules euerlastingly saued.

16 Secondly, by this wee gather, that Iudges and Iustices must especially looke to the godly: for *Bor.* saith, that all the Citie knew *Ruth* to be a godly woman: So that he bindeth himselfe by her Religion, to be as carefull for her, being a stranger, as if she were his naturall daughter: For as all the City knew her religious, so they would all reioyce to see her aduanced. And this is the cause wherefore the Lord hath so much commended vnto vs the estate of widowes and fatherlesse children, because for the most part they are oppressed, and not oppressors: vexed, and not vexers; receivers, and not doers of iniurie. And surely, such are simple godly men, they will beare many burthens before they complaine, and for euery trifle they will not trouble a Magistrate. Therefore euery Magistrate must say with *David*, My eyes shall be on them that speake ruth on the earth, and they that walke vprightly shall be my seruants: so haue you respect of persons, though not in iudgement, yet in common opinion, for the professors of religion are your dearest friends, who without ceasing power forth their prayers for you, that in

1. *Sam.* 12.  
2. 3 4. 5.

*Deut.* 10. 18  
*Leuit.* 3. 3.

*Psal.* 101. 6.



equity you might draw your sword from them. Oh how lamentable is it to heare, how poore godly men are daily blasphemed and reproched for their religion: when wicked Atheists, carnall persons, common swearers, and godlesse wretches, haue their hearts desire at the handes of the Magistrate. Surely such persons, who desire your aid against others, deserue your swords of iustice against themselves: for they neuer come into your presence, but to the dishonor of God. Execute iudgement, therefore, for them, and vpon them.

*Prou. 31. 31*

17 Thirdly, by this we gather, what it is that most commendeth women: for *Baaz* saith vertue; and if all the world crie the contrary, yet *Bathsheba* the mother of King *Salomon* will confirme it: for thus she saith, Fauour is deceitfull, beautie is but vaine; but a woman that feareth God, she will get praise to her selfe: for vertue and the feare of the Lord are both one thing. So that this is the thing we are most commended for, if religion will take any roote in their hearts: for beautie is worne by age, proportion of body lost by sicknes, loue of men at the wagging of hand, and braue apparell when wealth decayeth, only the feare of the Lord endureth for euer. Wee reade that *Vashti* the Queene of *Assuerus* was exceeding beautifull, but shee disobeyed her husband, and was put from her Princely roome, when godly *Ester* was taken in her stead. It the feare of God had beene in the former, to obey her husband, *Ester* had not soone come into her place. But the Lord, that he might punish the pride of the one, and reward the religion of the other, listed vp vertuous *Ester*, and cast downe that stately *Vashti*: to shew vnto vs, that much better is the feare of the Lord, then all the beauty and glory of the world.

*Ester 1. 16.*

*1. Pet. 3. 4.*

We finde many commended in the word of God, for their faith, but few for their fairenesse, that all should learne more canestly to labour, that the hid man of the heart may be found in incorruption of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of the Lord.

18 Lastly, let vs all learne by this, as well rich as poore, Gouvernours as subiects, men as women, that aboue all things we follow the example of *Ruth*, to please God more then themselues, to labour for vertue and Religion, as for a treasure hid in the ground, to search for it, as for gold and siluer, that we may boldly come before the Iudges of the Lord, and plead as subiects, seeing the knowledge of the Law resteth in our hearts. And let vs diligently labour for good reports, that the Magistrates may speake for vs, as *Boaz* doth for *Ruth*, to her singular comfort, that we may with boldnesse stand to be iudged, and not to suffer as euill doers. For a good name is better then a precious oyntment, and the godly and guiltlesse are more honourable, when they are causelesse accused: euen as *Ioseph*, the neereft way for him to come to the Kings fauour, was first of all to bee wrongfully imprisoned. So if wee studie to leade holy conuersations, let them draw vs to the Iudgement-seat as offenders: yet our Religion shall speake for vs, not guiltie: and though all the world should vniustly condemne vs, yet the Sonne of God shall sue out our pardon.

19 And true it is, I am thy: Wee shewed you in the beginning, that this consolation hath two parts. The first his confession in this verse: and the other his counsell in the next. Now then commeth his confession to be handled, wherein hee granteth himselfe a kinsman, and therefore bound vnto that dutie shee required of him: but yet withall he soberly telleth her, there is one neerer then I: meaning to shew her that the whole care of the matter doth not chiefly depend vpon him. Whereby wee gather, the singular conscience and humilitie of *Boaz*: for if the feare of God had not hindered him, hee might like scornefull persons, had denied that he had any kindred so base: and therefore hee might haue told her, that shee was come to a wrong man, that shee had mistaken her marke, that shee must not looke so high, as the choyce man in Bethlechem, and some baser husband will be-

Eccles. 7.1.

seeme a *Mozbite*. But he dorth not so, for hee confesseth against himselfe, that her sute was equall, and hee bound to deale in it. Where againe we haue another worthie example for all Magistrates to imitate, euen to pronounce iudgement against their owne causes, and giue euidence against their owne commoditie. For what a simple thing was it for *Boaz* to marrie with so poore a woman as *Ruth*, by whom he could hope for no great portion, but onely Religion? Oh that this vprightnesse would enter into the hearts of men in our dayes, when they handle their mutuall affaires, to speake the truth indifferently, as well against, as for themselves, yea, and forsake their dearest friends in vnlawfull sutes. But rather it reioyceth them at the heart, to see bad matters bolstered vp, and wrong iudgements through ignorance vniustly pronounced: whereas the plaines and defendants themselves, doe either of them in their owne conscience, know their cause to be naught: yet against both conscience, iustice, and equitie, will spend their money and hearts also, to bee thoroughly reuenged on their Christian neighbours, to overthrow their cause, be it neuer so equall: yet this is their drift, to make the righteous law, the onely defender of all their vnrighteous and vngodly dealings. How, if there were no law, nor Magistrate, would these malicious persons behaue themselves, that dare to wrest the helme of Iustice by corruption in these peaceable dayes? they are more fit to bee the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomortha, then the fellow-dwellers with the godly and faithfull? Would God that euery offender were bound to restore for euery default foure times so much, then would our quietnes be greater, our sutes vprighter, the truth vttered before danger, causes ended without chargeable costs, wisemen should bee the lawyers, the truth should bee the euidence, conscience and equitie should giue iudgement against our selues.

20 *Tarrie this night.* This is the counsell that *Boaz* giueth vnto *Ruth*, that seeing it was night, shee should tarrie

carrie till the morning, and then he will deale with her Kinsman in the behalfe of his right, which if hee will doe vnto her, Boaz cannot withstand him, but if hee refuse, then will Boaz performe the duetie. Which promise he confirmeth by an oath, *As the Lord liueth*: bidding her to sleepe vntill the morning. Where wee see first of all the kindnesse of the man, that would not presently thrust a poore woman from the place of her lodging, but quietly suffered her to harbour beside him; yea, and biddeth her to tarrie at her rest, and to sleepe vntill the morning. Where I cannot but excuse this good old man from all suspicion of dishonestie or vncleannesse: seeing he talketh of vertue, he neither lost it in himselfe, nor destroyed it in her, he knew not the other Kinsmans minde, therefore he would not defile her, least he had committed adulterie. Neither let this seeme strange vnto vs, for why should not old Boaz bee as chaste as yong Ioseph, *Gen. 39. 10*? or why should wee not as well beleue this, as that of Ioseph and Marie, who after our Sauours birth neuer touched or tempted each other? A time there was that adulterie was not knowne in Lacedemon: The yong Men and Maids of Chij were wont to dance and sacrifice together; yea, all night to conuerse with either Sexe, and yet it was neuer knowne that one of them was with child before marriage. The like was said of the old Germans, where they neuer found adulterie, they loued not marriage so much as husbands and wiues, that is, they preferred not the worke of marriage before honest loue: and good manners, were more worth among them then in other places good Lawes. I will say no more but that of *Thomas 2.* an Archbishop of Yorke, who being sick and perswaded by his Physitians to lie with a woman to saue his life, hee would not: *Pudicitiam amittere propter salutem carnis tandem moriturus*, Loose his honestie to saue his life for a little while: and no doubt Boaz had the same minde.

21 Secondly, hee would doe nothing which might preiudice the cause of her other Kinsman, before hee  
had

had gotten his consent to the deliuerie of his right, teaching vs thereby, that it is not lawfull to enter into the least part of our Neighbours titles, though wee may seeme to haue as great right in it, as Boaz had in *Ruth*, without the free and willing agreement of him that hath any propertie or interest therein.

Lastly, Boaz confirmeth his promise with an oath, which is the last speech vnto the woman, for her assurance to depend on his credit, and the last thing that must bee vsed in all our communications: But of these matters wee haue alreadie spoken, and therefore thus much for this time. Now let vs giue praise to God.

## The tenth Lecture.

*Ruth*, Chap. 3. verse, 14. 15. 16. 17. 18.

- 14 And so shee lay at his feete untill the morning, and then shee arose when one knew not another. For Boaz said, let no man know that a woman came into the floore.
- 15 And then bee said, giue mee the shoete where-withall thou art couered, and hold it vp: then bee measured sixe measures of Barley, and laied it vpon her: afterward bee went into the Citie.
- 16 But shee came to her Mother in law, which said, who art thou my Daughter, and shee declare whatseuer the man had done vnto her.
- 17 And shee said also, bee gaue mee these sixe measures of Barley, for bee said, thou shalt not returne empty to thy Mother in law.

18 Then

18 Then said shee, be of good comfort vntill thou know how the matter will fall out, for the man will not rest vntil he end it this day.



Hese wordes are the last part of this Chapter: wherein is shewed vnto vs how Boaz dismisseth Ruth, after they had slept till the morning: and Ruth returneth ioyfully to her Mother againe.

The wordes contayne two parts generally in them: The first part is betweene Boaz and Ruth, verse 14. 15. The second is betweene Ruth and Naomi, in the three next verses following. The first part betweene Boaz and Ruth, is of those things which they did together in the Barne. First, that Ruth lay at his feet vntill the morning. Secondly, that shee arose early before day, because Boaz would haue none to know that a woman came into the floore. After they were both risen: Boaz giueth to her sixe measures of Barley, layeth them vpon her, and sendeth her away. Secondly, hee himselfe goeth into the Citie, verse 15. to performe that which he had promised vnto her.

The other part betweene Ruth and Naomi, in the three next verses, containeth a declaration of those things which passed betweene them twaine after shee came from Boaz. Wherein Naomi first asketh who shee was, because comming home early before the day, shee could not know her by her countenance: To whom Ruth declareth all things which passeth between Boaz and her, shewing vnto her the sixe measures of Barley which the man gaue vnto her for Naomies sake, verse 16. 17. Secondly, after Naomi vnderstood the proceedings of Ruth, shee comforteth her, verse 18. assuring her of the diligence of Boaz, that hee would not sleepe till he had ended the matter the very same day. Of these parts let vs briefly speake in order, as the Spirit of God shall giue vterance, and the time permit.



2 And so shee lay at his feet untill the morning. As we haue heard in the former Verses, the conference had between Boaz and Ruth, the end and conclusion whereof was this, that Ruth should content her selfe to tarric with him, and sleepe vntill the morning. So in this place, the performance thereof is noted vnto vs. For the holy Ghost vndoubtedly expressing these words, doth it to signifie vnto vs these two things: First, that Ruth remayned satisfied with the answer of Boaz, and troubled him no more with further talke. Secondly, that he might deliuer these two innocent persons from all suspition of incontinencie: for neither talked they any more, or turned one to another, but either of them both contented with their hard lodging, gaue themselves to quiet sleepe vntill the morning.

Where first of all we note that the gift of continencie or chastitie, is not in the nature or power of man, but is a holy fruit of true and vnfained religion, yea, a special worke of the spirit of God, as appeareth in both these godly persons: for if either of both had beene giuen ouer, no doubt but nature had put them forward to the satisfying of their carnall lusts: But seeing, as Christ saith, none can haue it but them to whom it is giuen, and euerie gift commeth downe from the Father of lights. This among other, is a speciall and extraordinary blessing of God, vpon many persons truly religious: not for any other cause, but that thereby they might more freely giue themselves to please the Lord, as Ioseph answered his wanton Mistris, how shall I doe this, seeing I feare God? The vse of this point is this, seeing wee acknowledge this benefit, to come from the Lord, let vs among our prayers desire the same, that wee might crucifie the works of the old man within vs, sanctifie the powers of our soules and bodies, be strengthened to resist the temptations of Satan, and bring euerie wanton desire, and wauering affection into subiection of the spirit of God, which ruleth and raigneth in the hearts of the faithfull. And aboue all things let vs earnestly labour for the feare of the

Mat. 19. 11

Iam. 1. 27.

Gen. 39. 9.

Gal. 5. 25.

the Lord, that wee may haue the Tree as well as the fruit, the Founrayne as well as the streame, the roote from whence it springeth, as well as the blade, and increase of the same, for except the streame be supplied by the Spring, it will quickly die, except the blade be nourished by the roote, it will soone be withered, except the Fire of the holy Ghost be increased with the coales of the knowledge of God, it will soone be quenched with the cold water of humane infirmirie; or else willingly goe out of it selfe. And if euer this exhortation were needfull, it is most necessarie in these our vncleane and filthy dayes, wherein Fornications, Adulteries, Whoordomes, and all actions of incontinencie did neuer more abound, and the reason hereof is this, because Men and Women, haue refused the knowledge of God: and therefore as the Apostle saith, he hath giuen them ouer to worke filthinesse one with another. As the flesh lusteth against the spirit, so the spirit lusteth against the flesh: the one is carnall and bringeth damnation: the pure knowledge of God is spirituall and worketh saluation: but if the bodies of men were made the Temples of the holy Ghost, how could they conuert them to the members of Harlots? But be not deceiued, for God who is true, is not mocked: you which now delight your bodies in the pleasures of vncleannesse, shall lament your woes in the sorrowes of bitternesse: when your soules and bodies or their wanton follies, shall eternally curse themselves, and cry vengeance, vengeance, to all their deserts: yea, though the Almighty should grant you repentance, yet the consideration of your whoordomes will trouble your consciences, that it will be much longer before your hearts be eased, or sinnes released, for such as is the festred wound, such must bee the searching and purging corasue: he that stole little hath but little to restore; but he that stole much, must recompence much againe.

3 Secondly, by this we note, the diuersitie of the distribution of the gifts of God, for many godly per-

Rom. 1. 24.

1. Sam. 11.

4.

Gen. 38. 18

Gen. 39. 9.

Luc. 19. 8.

sons are clear from one sinne which raigneth in other, and haue some proper gifts which are denied to other, some are subiect to one sinne, and some to another. In this place *Boaz* and *Ruth* are declared, and commended for continent persons, but in another place *Dauid* and *Bathsheba* godly also, are ouer-taken with this folly: *Iudab* the sonne of *Iacob* was a good man, yet hee lay with his daughter in law *Thamar*; sitting in the likenes of a whoore: *Ioseph* his brother also feared God, yet he refused his Ladie and Mistris: And as it is in this, so it falleth out in all other, for some that haue great gifts of God his spirit, yet are too much giuen to the loue of mony; others againe like *Zacheus* distribute the greatest part of their possessions, to satisfie their iniuries and relieue the poore: other of the faithfull like the Apostles *Iames* and *Iohn*, desire the superioritie, and chieft places in the Church: but many, like the other Apostles, enuie and disdaine them for it.

And thus the Lord which deliuereth his Spirit by measure, giueth to some a lesse, and to some a greater measure thereof, euen as a rich man distributeth his almes, giuing to one a good reward, and to another a small, so the Lord leaueth some to bee ouer-come by their lusts, other by their money, many by their honour, some by their office, other by their pride, and euery man hath some speciall sinne that raigneth in him aboue other: for diuers men being called to one hope, and obtayning the like precious faith in regard of Christ, are diuersly affected and infected with sinne.

4 And this teacheth vs these doctrines: first, that wee neuer condemne the persons of the sinners, but the sinnefull acts they doe commit: who should condemne *Nath* for drunkennesse, *Dauid* for murther, *Iudab* for incest, the Apostles for aspiring superioritie surely, they were godly persons, and had their seuerall falls; that the mercy of God might be magnified in their raising vp againe: for none of the godly are able to goe vpon the waters, as *Peter* would, but they must sinke

as Peter did, and yet they perish not, but are lifted vp, and saued by Christ, as Peter was: though our old Adam cause vs to commit many sinnes, yet our new Adam will remoue all: wee must iudge charitably of all our bretheren that are ouer-taken in their seuerall sinnes: Sara lied vnto the Lord himselfe. Onesimus was a Theefe and a runne-away from Philemon, Rebecca caused Iacob her Sonne to beguile his owne Father, and all the holy Patriarkes had many Wiues, yet none must bee so bold as to condemne any of them, notwithstanding their seuerall and manyfold faults: Euen so in these our dayes, though wee see and behold our bretheren, some ouer-come with the world, other by promotion, many by their lusts and concupiscences, other by their braue apparrell, nay if they steale and robbe, yet wee must not iudge but charitably of them. I speake not this to encourage any hereunto: for if grace abound aboue sinne, yet cursed are they that sinne, that grace and blessing might abound vnto them: for if wee may not doe euill, where wee know certainly good may ensue thereof, much lesse may wee doe euill, to make the mercie of God the bawd of our sinnes, but this we must remember, that there is no condemnation to the righteous, although they fall seuen times a day, but if any sinne vpon presumption of God his mercies, their damnation is iust, and are like a Theefe that stealeth, because he seeth one among twentie pardoned by the Prince.

5 Secondly, there are many that condemne the whole profession, because they liue not all in the same perfection, and bring not forth the same fruits which by this doctrine wee see here condemned: For as the Grapes of the Vine haue some lesse and some more sweetnesse, yet all are Grapes, and grow of the Vine: so the Saints of God, haue some more puritie, and some lesse, and yet all are nourished by Christ the Vine: what if some (saith the Apostle) haue not beleueed, shall the grace of God be made of none effect? and what if some haue often fallen into sinne, shall the whole

Gospeil

John. 15. 1.

Ro. 11. 12.

2. Pet. 2. 1.

1. Cor. 11. 6.

Gospell for their sakes be discredited? nay, the Lord hath alway some that liue so purely, such as *Isaack*, *Ioseph*, *Boaz*, *Daniel*, *Zacharie*, and *Elizabeth*, whom all the world can neuer blemish: howsoever others haue their publike faults, first that the work of repentance, which is a grace of God, might be practised: Secondly, that God his mercie in sauing great sinners, might be magnified. Thirdly, that the faithfull (seeing their daily falls) might more earnestly desire their finall deliuerance. Lastly, that the wicked by this meanes might haue occasion, by their blasphemies to worke their owne damnation.

Psal. 31. 20.

Mat. 11. 18

19.

6 *Afterward shee arose, for Boaz said.* Now the night well passed in quiet sleepe, and the dawning of the day approaching, *Ruth* at the commandement of *Boaz* ariseth before the day-light, least any should know shee had carried with him all that night, whereby the good old man signifieth vnto vs, that it is no new thing in the world, that slanders should be raised, for this was the thing that *Boaz* feared, that if any should haue seen the woman with him, they would presently conceiue it were for no goodnesse. For the world museth as it vseth, and they will soonest espie a more in the eye of a godly man: it euer was, is, and shall be, the causelesse surmises and reproches, shall bee brought vp vpon the godly, for Princes nor people can be freed there from: the which *Dauid* felt well enough, when hee said in a certaine place, that one blessednesse in God his Kingdome, shall bee this, *to be kept from the strife of tongues*, thereby insinuating, that they must needs endure them in this life present. Wee know what our Sauour reporteth of the Pharisees, how they accused him to be a friend of Publicanes, Harlots, and Sinners, and *Iohn Baptist* to haue a Deuill. Therefore this must worke patience in the faithfull, that are like affected and afflicted with venomous tongues, for wee are not better then those Fathers are, who many yeares agoe sustayned the same reproches, and left the burthen behinde them, to bee borne by vs, for the world is no changeling:

ling : that which then they spoke against them , now they spit against vs, and though the Authours of these slanders bee many yeares since departed , yet their manners and Heires shall abide while the world standeth. But now to come to the wordes, wherein the minde of Boaz is, that none should know that women were with him , at such a suspected time : Why ? will some say , is it such a matter to talke with a woman priuately and alone , wee may doe it publikely , and who can say nay vnto it ? I grant , wee may , and with lesse offence , yet Boaz would giue no occasion of offence , because wee must abstayne from all appearance of euill : wee must not only be carefull we sinne not, but Christians must bee carefull to auoide all suspicion of sinne : it is not lawfull for Christians commonly to companie and keepe with enemies , because it may be thought that they are secretly in league with them : it is not lawfull for a Christian to goe into the house of a Harlot, because it will discredit his name, it is not lawfull for a Christian to goe into a Temple of Idolls , vnlesse it be to deface them , because it may bee thought hee goeth to worship : the like may bee sayd of all other in the like kinde , where men are as guiltie to looke on , as they that are the principals.

7 And behold, I would to God that this carefullnesse , to auoide and shunne the outward appearance of iniquitie were well considered : the extraordinarie charges in dyet or apparrell would be eschewed , least wee bee accounted daintie and prodigall, or prowde : slacknesse in going to Sermons would bee amended, least we be deemed idle and secure Atheists : buying, selling, playing, and gaming, on the Sabbath day, would bee punished , least it bee thought wee haue no feare or care to worship the Lord : the daily and most lamentable swearing of rich and poore , old and yong, Parents, and Children , Masters and Seruants , Husbands and Wiues , Men and Women , would with terrour of the Lords iudgements bee restrayned,

Q

idlenesse

1. Theff. 5.  
22.



idlenesse would bee reformed, drunkenesse in euery  
 degree would be corrected, dalliance and wantonnesse  
 ashamed, cosening and deceiuing simple persons bee  
 banished, and finally, if this feare of the shadow of sinne  
 would rest in the hearts of mankinde, neither should  
 the substance thereof ouercome them, the pleasures al-  
 lure them, the hope deceiue them, the profit compell  
 them, the glorie prouoke them, or the end thereof con-  
 demne them. Let vs therefore beloued, neither fre-  
 quent or approach to persons that are suspected, or pla-  
 ces that are corrupted: we can touch no pitch but wee  
 must be polluted, nor any vnclane thing, but wee are  
 defiled: sinne is a contagious disease, it will infect the  
 walls and garments where it is committed, and what a-  
 greement is betweene the children of God and *Belial*?  
 touch not their meats, handle not their pleasures, and  
 tast not their companies, for the world seeth thee and  
 will slander, the Lord seeth thee, and will recompence.  
 Wee auoid the sight of Serpents, as *Moses* fled from his  
 rod, why should we not then flie from the sight of that  
 old Serpent the Father of lies, which by all meanes  
 possible seeketh to deface the name of Christ, and the  
 nature of the faithfull? wee come not to the picture of  
 the Deuill, which is deuised by a painter, but we loath  
 the presence and abhorre the proportion of it, why  
 should wee not then, as much the works of himselfe,  
 whereby hee is more slyly communicated vnto vs, then  
 in all the pictures and images of the world? we auoide  
 the aire where the Cockatrice laieth her eggs, because  
 shee poisoneth the same: but alas, wee daily delight in  
 the pathes of vnrighteousnes, where is greater danger  
 to our soules, then all the poisons of the world can  
 bring to the body, thus we escape out of the snare, but  
 we fall into the ditch; we steale at Gnat, but we swal-  
 low vp Camels: we play with the Lyon, and are afraid  
 of the Lambe: death is at the end of our iourney, and  
 yet we will not see it. Therefore againe, and againe,  
 beware of offences, that is, take heede you bring not  
 the glorious names of Christians to discredit, your  
 faith

faith to ignominie, your hope to shame, your libertie to slauerie, and fill not the mouths of the wicked, with your vnwise and intemperate walking.

8 Secondly, by this we note, that we must not only abstaine from the appearance of euill things, but wee must also beware, we make not good things euill, but *Barz* knew it was lawfull for him to talke priuately or publikely, day or night, alone or in companie with any woman liuing: but hee was afraide lest any should take his example, as a rule or defence for their priuate wantonnesse, or iudge his companie with *Ruth* to be vterly vnlawfull, whereby the name of a Magistrate, the title of an Elder, and the credit of two faithfull Seruants of God might be impaired. Therefore to stoppe these occasions, with timely arising, he was carefull that the knowledge thereof should come vnto none, that a lawfull thing misvnderstood or conceiued should not be made vnlawfull. And truly, this teacheth vs also, in Christian wisdom, to weigh all our doings by the rule of the Apostle, when he saith, all things are lawfull, but all things are not expedient, all things are lawfull, but I will not bee brought into bondage of any: where hee willeth vs not only to see what wee may doe without danger to our selues, but also without danger to any other: Secondly, that in nothing we preiudice our Christian libertie: whereby we gather that euery thing must be considered with the circumstance of time, place, and persons, a lawfull thing in time may bee of place, and being lawfull for time and place, yet it may be vnlawfull for the persons, this we will make plaine by the example of almes and fasting, which our Sauour Christ himselfe vsed. It is lawfull and a holy thing, to giue almes at all times, yet if it be done in a market-place, or with a publike signe, as to blow a trumpet, or toll a bel, or such like, it is hypocrisie by the sentence of our Sauour, and therefore vnlawfull: euen so, to pray continually is a good thing, but if it bee done in the corners of the streets, or in the Churches while all the Congregation be hearing the Preacher, it is vterly vnlawfull,

1. Cor. 12.

13.

Mat. 6. 1. 2.

3. 4. 5.

Num. 25. 8.

the same may be said of Preaching, and Reading, Eating and Drinking, Laughing and Weeping, Working and Playing, Buying and Selling, Watching and Sleeping, with such like, all which are good, necessarie and lawfull, yet as they exceede in time, place, and persons, they may be vnlawfull, and therefore not to bee done. By this let all the godly learne, to vse the meane in all their indifferent actions, and specially according to this present Scripture of *Buzz* and *Rubb*, I would to God, that this too common companying of men and women together, were altogether buried and banished from vs. I meane such as is in this wanton manner, not only in the married who with their open and publike dalliance giue great offence to sober minds, but also in the vnmarried, in their vnseemely meetings, dangerous conuenticles, wanton feasts, and immodest running and dancing together, which in many vnstaied persons, stirreth vp the fire of concupiscence, that ought rather to be quenched. Euen as *Phineas* strooke the Israelite and the Madianitish woman, together vpon one speare, so would God our *Zimries* and *Corbies* had some punishment, to stay other from committing the like in euery age, for it is much to bee feared, that the heauie hand of God is gone out against vs, by reason of our open and publike whoordomes, for euen now the children are infected with the example of their Elders, and what hope can there bee of the Ages to come, when those that must be the Parents of them, are thus poysoned with sinne, in the dayes of their youth: surely, as the rotten seede bringeth but a sorrowfull haruest, so corrupted and wicked children will bring forth a wofull and lamentable posteritie. Put away therefore this euill, of laying stumbling blocks before the blinde, giuing offences to the weake bretheren, breeding the slander of the holy Gospell, grieuing the hearts of the sober minded, drawing the curse from heauen vpon vs: and vterly drowning our selues, and all our Progenie, in euerlasting destruction.

9 And when bee had sayd giue mee thy sheete. This

is the first thing which the Holy Ghost reporteth of *Boaz*, since hee awaked from sleepe, and arose from his lodging, wherein hee calleth for the sheete wherewithall *Ruth* was couered, (which no doubt but shee brought from home with her) the which hee filleth with sixe measures of Barley, the which measures, as I take it, were Hins, and contayned an Ephah, which wee haue shewed you was seuen Gallons and a halfe of our English measure, for so much gathered *Ruth* the first day of her gleanings. Out of the which wee note the dutie of euery godly man, which is this, neuer to bee wearie of distributing to the Church: for *Boaz* had often bestowed much vpon *Ruth* and *Naomi*, yet wee see so often as hee could conveniently, hee still continueth his liberalitie. For this cause *S. Paul* willeth vs neuer to bee wearie of well-doing, for hee which needeth our liberalitie to day, will also want our reliefe to morrow, and so often as the faithfull Brother commeth and complayneth, so often are wee bound (if wee haue) to succour his necessitie. I know many are willing to doe good once or twise in one person, but to giue so often as *Boaz* did to *Naomi*, they cannot abide, yet this is our weaknesse and hardnesse of heart, for as wee pray euery day for our daily bread, so euery day (hauing enough) wee must distribute our bread: therefore wee must follow the counsell of *S. Paul*, not to be slack in doing of good, for in due time wee shall reape if wee faint not, and therefore while we haue time, let vs doe good vnto all, but especially to the household of Faith, for as a Father doth euery day sustayne and prouide for his owne household, so should wee which are the Stewards of the Lords possessions, giue of his owne to his poore Seruants, for wee shame his Maiestie, if wee suffer his Familie to want. Wee reade that our Sauour came often to one house, yet was not accounted a chargeable guest. Wee reade that all the poore in the primitive Church, were daily maintayned at the cost of the wealthy: Our Sauour hath told vs that wee shall alway haue the poore a-

2. Theß. 3.

13.

Gal. 6. 9. 10.

mong vs, to whom wee may doe good. Not that wee should once or twise bestow liberally, and euer after close vp our beneuolence, but that the same poore persons that dwell among vs should daily receiue their daily reliefe. For how shall we desire of God to finish his worke of redemption, begunne in our soules, when wee cease to perfect our liberalitie bestowed on the poore. And now beloued in the Lord, if euer you did put on compassionate hearts towards your poore brethren, in this time of dearth, then thinke not sufficient to distribute once, but stretch out your hands againe, and againe, to help the necessities of the poore Saints, which daily crie vnto you, giue, giue, that your loue may increase, your compassion augment, and your fellow feeling of the same hunger, may worke a fellow feeling on the same reliefe.

10. *And shee came home.* Now wee are come to the second part of this Scripture, which concerneth *Naomi* and *Ruth*. And first heere is set downe her coming home to her Mother in law before day, to whom shee declareth how the man had vsed her: what promise he made her, and what gift he sent her, where we see the diligence of *Ruth*, who hasted to her Mother in law, to shew her the newes, and to auoide the slander which wee spoke of before. And this teacheth vs a mutuall concord in the duties of our profession, that the weaker should be warned by the elder, as *Ruth* was by *Boaz*, for we must not let any bee lost through default of our negligence, but the wisest must gouerne, and the other must obey, if any bee wearie, let them lay their heads vpon our aduise, for the credit of the Gospell pertaineth to all, and therefore all must be carefull to maintayne the same.

11 *Then said shee.* *Naomi* hearing the report of this prosperous successe, and seeing the corne that *Boaz* had giuen her, comforteth her Daughter to tarric the issue, looking for a ioyfull end of so happy a beginning: for shee knew *Boaz* would not faint in that cause, that so much concerned his credit, as this did, nor sleepe till he

he had ended his intended deuise. Whereby we first of all note, that here is a godly example for Parents to imitate, to stay their children by exhortation, to depend in all things vpon the leasure of the Lord, for if they be sick, the comfort of Parents is much worth, if in trouble, the counsell of Parents may ease them, if in labour, the Parents aduise will much encourage them, if in danger, the care of their Parents may deliuer them, and if they bee obstinate, who but Parents can reclaime them, for as *Abraham* answered *Isaack* his Sonne, when he asked him for a Sacrifice, the Lord said, hee will provide a Sacrifice, euen so Parents must shew their children, the providence of God to maintayne them, his loue to embrace them, his care to defend them, his word to instruct them, and the merits of Christ to saue them. Secondly, by this wee gather a worthy example of a godly Magistrate, who by his wonted and accustomed diligence, had wonne and deserved this commendation that here *Naomi* giueth of him, that hee would not rest till hee had finished the matter, and followed the sute of the Widow to the end, which is a worthy example for men in authoritie to imitate, that for conscience they should labour as faithfully in the cause of the poore, as if they were hired by fee in the sute of the wealthy, & would God this could enter into their mindes, which like dull Horses will trauaile no further, then the spurre of money pricketh them forward: how farre are they from the vprightnesse of *Iob*, which was an eye to the blinde, feet to the lame, Father to the poore, and diligently sought out the strife which hee knew not: they are no Rulers, that in meekenesse intreat them not, in mercie forbear them not, and in iustice reward them not. But of this we haue spoken before: now let vs giue praise to God for that which hath bene spoken.



## The eleuenth Lecture.

*Ruth. Chap. 4. verse, 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.*

- 1 And Boaz went up to the gate and sate downe there, when, behold the Kinsman came by, of whom Boaz had spoken, to whom he said, hee, such a one, come hither and sit downe here : who came and sate downe.
- 2 Then Boaz tooke ten men of the Elvers of the Citie, and said to them, sit downe here, and they sate downe.
- 3 Afterward he said to the Kinsman, Naomi that is come againe out of the Countrie of Moab, will sell a parcell of Land, which was our Kinsman Elimelechs.
- 4 And I thought to aduertise thee, saying, buy it before the Assisants and Elders of my people, if thou wilt redeeme it, redeeme it, but if thou wilt not redeeme it, tell mee, for I know there is none beside thee, to redeeme it, and I am after thee. Then he answered, I will redeeme it.
- 5 Then said Boaz, what day thou buyest the Field of the hand of Naomi, thou must also buy it of Ruth the Moabiteesse, the Wife of the Dead, to stirre up the name of the Dead, upon his inheritance.
- 6 And the Kinsman answered, I cannot redeeme it, least I destroy mine owne inheritance, & deeme my right to thee, for I cannot redeeme it.



OW, by the permission of the Almighty, wee are come to the last Chapter, and last part of this Historie, wherein the Holy Ghost sheweth vnto vs, how Boaz performeth his promise made vnto Ruth in the former Chapter, and taketh her to bee his Wife : the whole Chapter contayneth two parts, the first is the marriage of Boaz, and the second is the description of his Kindred, as well his an-

ancestors, as his of-spring. The first part of his marriage is described in the first fiftene verses of this Chapter, with all the circumstances thereof necessarie to be knowne, and we will diuide it into two parts: first, must be considered that which passed betweene the other kinsman and Boaz in the first ten verses: secondly, the manner and circumstances of the marriage, vnto the end of the fiftenth verse. The things that passed betweene Boaz and his other kinsman, are first their conference about the matter in these first sixe verses: secondly, the alienation of the right from the other kinsman to Boaz, in the foure next verses: the conference is described by the place, that is was at the gate of the Citie, vers. 1. secondly, by the witnesses, that it was before the Elders of the Citie, vers. 2. The matter being thus prepared, Boaz propoundeth the cause of their meeting in two parts, first, for the redeeming of the land at the hand of Naomi, which was the inheritance of their kinsman Elimelechs, whereunto he answereth, that he will redeeme it, vers. 4. secondly, he propoundeth vnto him the marriage of Ruth, that the case so standeth, if he redeeme the inheritance, he must also marry with the widow, for otherwise she would not agree, and this is the fifth verse. Vnto which latter condition the kinsman answereth, that he cannot doe it, first, shewing the reason of it, lest he destroy his owne inheritance: secondly, yeelding him power to redeeme his right in this behalfe, vers. 6. Of these parts let vs briefly speake as the Spirit of God shall giue vs vtterance, and the time permit.

2 And Boaz went vp to the gate. Wee haue heard in the former Chapter, how Boaz, after he had dispatched Ruth backe againe to her mother in law, himselfe went into the Citie, to finish vp the matter, now in this verse we see the place mentioned where Boaz bestowed himselfe after hee was come thither, which is the gate of the Citie, where he waited till he could see his kinsman come in or out, and seeing him, called, who came vnto him, and sate downe beside him. Now the  
gates

Chap. 3. 15.

Gen. 34. 20

Deut. 21. 19  
and 22. 15.

Gen. 23. 10.

Gen. 22. 17

Gen. 24. 60

Rebecca.

Mat. 16. 16

18.

gates of the Cities in those ancient dayes, were the publike places of Iudgement, as appeareth in many places of Scripture, among other, when *Hemor* and *Sichem* would perswade their people to be circumcised, it is said, they sate in the gate of the Citie: the like is that of *Moses*, that the obstinate sonne should bee brought by his owne parents to the Elders of the Citie, and to the gate of the place: likewise if any man should accuse his wife not to be a virgin at the day of her marriage, then her parents should bring the signes of her virginity to the Elders of the Citie, and the gate thereof. But we must also know, that the publike iudgements and trials were done so openly for diuers causes. First, that no truth might bee concealed, and so wrong iudgement pronounced, for thither euery one might freely come and speake their minds. Secondly, that strangers might haue law and iustice, as well as their naturall and native inhabitants, and therefore it was at the very entrance of their Cities: so we see *Abraham* a stranger, in the Iudgement place was heard before *Hebron* and *Heth*, when he bought his burying-place. Lastly, because that munition, strength, furniture, power and defence of the Citie, lay in the gates: as God blesseth *Abraham*, so also *Laban* and his mother blesse their sister *Ribkah*, that their seed should possess the gates of their enemies, that is, their strongest defence. And our Sauour Christ, shewing his Apostles that would build his Church vpon the rock which they had confessed, saith, that the gates of hell should not preuaile against it, meaning the whole power of the diuell should neuer ouercome it.

3 And this teacheth vs by many things, first, that in matters of triall, equitie and iustice, it is an iniurie, if publike faultes bee priuately adiudged, for *Abraham* dealing but for a peece of land with *Hebron*, which was but a priuate matter, could not obaine it, till it came to the gate of the Citie, the publike place of Iudgement, and if a matter so honest and lawfull could not be ended, without such an open and publike assembly,

much

much more open offences, which are in themselves wicked and dishonest: for the Apostle saith, that those that sinne openly, must bee openly rebuked. Surely there is none of vs that are ignorant of the great euill, which commeth by the priuate handling of offences, for thereby guilty persons escape vnpunished, vniust matters are by consent confirmed, publike peace is much abused, as if colours were discerned by blinde men, or gold without the touch-stone in the light: Yet herein are we much bound to magnifie the Lord, who hath vouchsafed vs open Courts for deciding of controuersies, punishing of fellons, and maintenance of peace, some for waightier, and some for higher contentions; for as the wax melteth before the Sunne, so the subtiltie of offenders at the examination of the Magistrate.

1. Tim. 5. 20  
Deu. 24. 17

4 Secondly, by this we note that we must in iudgement haue regard both to the stranger, & to the freeborne, to the poore, and to the rich, to the widow, and to the married; and finally both alike to women and men, for thus the Lord commandeth; Peruert not the right of the stranger or infant, neither take the garment of a widow to pledge. For wee must remember that *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Iacob*, the Fathers of the faithfull, were all their liues strangers in other lands, and therefore wee which either would or should be their children, by doing iniurie to harbourlesse strangers, do reuile and oppresse our spirituall fathers, when we loue not their persons, maintaine not their right, receiue not their suites, and heare not their supplications, though they were against our owne selues, if we iustly deserue them, but of this matter we haue spoken in the first and second Chapters. Thirdly, by this we learne, that publike Iudges, Iustices and Iudgements, should be defended by publike authoritie; for as these Iudges sate in the gate where the munitions were, that if any should refuse them, they had power and strength to compell them: euen so, if men of wisdom haue not authoritie, who seech not that euery disordered person doth

1. Sam. 13.  
33.

doth contemne them. But if they haue authority, and do not shew it in punishing of offenders, without feare or fauour of men, they are like to *Saul*, when God had commanded him to kill the Amalekites, and spare neither man, woman, childe, or beast aliue, yet contrarie to this commandement, he saued King *Agag*, but the Lord refused him, and cast him out of fauour, and *Agag* was hewen in peeces by the Prophet *Samuel*: euen so it is to be feared, that there be a great many *Sauls* in euery place, whose affections stand for law, sparing their friends for fauour, and great men for feare, who are likewise reprobated of the Lord, and rebuked by his Ministers. And heere we haue good occasion to be thankfull to the Lord, which hath giuen our Magistrates this power, that all things are done in the name of the Prince, and assisted by the countrey, for the punishment of offenders: and I pray God encrease more obedience to their authoritie in others, and more courage in themselves, to strike asunder with the sword of Iustice, the indissoluble knots of iniurious and contentious persons, and to giue the offenders their deserued reward. Then heere we haue *Boaz* sitting in the Iudgement place, as one that was not ashamed of his lawfull cause, and the Lord which guideth all things, and would now regard the Religion of *Ruth*, bringeth the other kinsman to the sight of *Boaz*, who calleth him, and he commeth at the request of *Boaz*, and there tarrieth and sitteth downe, where wee will leaue him, and goe to the second part, which is the witness of this conference.

§ Then *Boaz* tooke tenne men. The witnesses of the actions, which are to passe in this place, wee heare in these words to be ten men of the Elders of the Citie: there are onely ten in my iudgement, because euery Citie of the Israelites had twelue Gouvernours, according to the number of the Tribes of Israel, to whom appertained the ordering of all ciuil causes among them, for they medled not with religion: now it is very likely that *Boaz* and this other kinsman, being men of so

great

great kindred and wealth, were two of the number of the Elders, who being the parties in sute, had the residue of their fellowes, to be witneses of the actions that passed betweene them. And this interpretation is confirmed, by the diligent examination of the place, for it is said that *Boaz* tooke them, as if he were equall or greater in authoritie then they, and the other being a man of great wealth, as appeareth by this, that he was willing to redeeme the inheritance of *Naomi*, which could be no small charge, considering the late troublesome dayes, and after we shall heare in the sixt verse, that he would not take *Ruth* for feare of his owne name should bee put out in Israel, whereby appeareth his calling not to bee meane, beside his linage which was to the greatest house in *Judah*, by the which it must needs follow, that he was an Elder or Ruler among them, which being plaine both by this and other places of Scripture, that the ciuill gouernment of the people was exercised by Elders, and that the Elders themselues cou'd doe nothing without the consent of their fellowes. Wee see heere noted vnto vs this excellent doctrine, namely, that men in authority and gouernment must exercise nothing without the due execution of their owne law and decrees: we see heere this *Boaz* a man of great authoritie, and led by the Spirit of God, hauing a cause for himselfe, would not desire, or goe about to accomplish it, but in the Iudgement-seate and presence of the Elders, so that no fauour of persons may breake the course of Iustice, whereby a Common-wealth is ruled. Some thinke it a base thing that great men shall stand to bee iudged in the place of common persons: And I thinke it as great a fault that common persons should haue any access to Magistrates to be iudged by them, for as it debaseth their estate to be ioyned with these in iudgement, so it troubleth their quietnesse to be Iudges ouer them. But some, and they of the greater sort, which haue their law in their owne hands, deale with it as *Judah* did, when it was told him that his daughter *Thamar* was with childe, then



then there was nothing but fire and fagot to punish her for her whoredome, till she shewed him that hee was the man by whom it came, as *Nathan* did with *Dauid*, but then the heate of the fire was well cooled, when himselfe was found to be the greatest offender: euen so many deale against the weaker and poorer sort, the lawes are executed to the vttermost, but the rich and wealthie which offer all the iniurie, gather all the friendship, which is not onely a fault to other, but in their owne consciences, for how can they iudge another, when the same offence condemneth themselves? and therefore, as there was one generall place of Iudgement, so there was but one common manner of triall: like as God iudgeth the rich and poore, so a good Magistrate should equally receiue both, and be as willing to be iudged themselves, as to giue sentence vpon others.

6 Secondly, by this example of *Boaz* and the Elders of Bethlem, we obserue that in our publike busines, we must resort especially to the Magistrates, euen in those things that require nothing but record and witness-bearing. This *Boaz* might haue gotten some of his priuate friends, before whom he might haue effected the matter, but we see him heere the solicitor of his owne cause, and craueth no friendship, but the witnesse of the Elders, by the which this doctrine was confirmed: and therefore our Sauour hauing cleansed a Leper, biddeth him to shew himselfe to the Priests, for a witnesse vnto them: and for this cause it was commanded in the law, that the waightie matters should be brought before the Priests, for Magistrates must heare as well the conclusion of peace, as the contentions of disquietnesse betweene man and man. Wherein we are bound to render most humble and earnest thanks to almighty God, who hath vouchsafed vs this blessing, that the contracts of matrimonie, the conueyance of possessions, the redeeming of morgaged lands, the records of inheritances, and the purchase of euery lawfull thing remaineth written in the seuerall Courts and Offices of credit,

credit, that they might be euermlasting testimonies for the posterities succeeding.

7 *Afterward Boaz said.* Boaz like a wise man concealeth his minde from the Elders and kinsman, till they were all quietly set together, and then hee beginneth with one part of his sute, telling the kinsman of the land of *Eshmelech*, which was to be redeemed by his neereest kinsman, the which Boaz propoundeth, but very obscurely, that thereby hee might thoroughly trie his minde and good will toward *Naomi*, and making it knowne in the presence of the Elders, he might by no meanes recall his words. And this teacheth vs not only innocent vprightnes, but also godly policie, that we be carefull for the speaking in iudgement, so much as may further our iust and lawfull cause, and not hinder it. For thus dealeth Boaz, he did not at the first shew the drift, and secret of his minde, which was the marriage of *Ruth*, whereof as yet he knoweth nothing, but beginning the matter with the redemption of the lands, coloureth the marriage by the restoring of the inheritance, for by this meanes he openeth the secrets of his kinsmans heart, that hee bore some good will to the cause of *Naomi*, but of this matter enough.

8 *Wherefore he determined.* In the former verse, and in this, Boaz propoundeth the matter to his kinsman, testifying thereby, that of duty and conscience he did it in the behalfe of the widow, and requireth him for his duerie and conscience, to performe the part of a kinsman, which is either to redeeme the right, or to render it vp, shewing that beside them two, there is not one that was bound vnto it: and also promising, that if he refused, then he himselfe would discharge that dutie. Where we see first of all a holy example, teaching vs to deale with our neighbours, for our selues, or for other, euen as Boaz did in this place: for he might haue charged his kinsman, that hee had no loue or care to *Naomi*, that he had omitted his dutie, in not redeeming the inheritance before this day, that this couetousnesse was: so great, that he had forgot the very Law of God: and

Mat. 5. 5.

29.

1. Cor. 13. 5

Ephes. 4. 3.

and finally, he might haue called vpon the Magistrates for some punishment to be inflicted on him for his disobedience to the law of God, and neglect of his dutie toward *Naomi*. But he doth none of these, but soberly in the presence of the Elders, hee turneth his gentle speech to the partie, and hauing propounded the matter, requireth a present answere. Whereby we are admonished, that with the like charitie wee handle our neighbours, if we haue them at any aduantage, for this is that meekenesse that causeth to inherit the earth, for thereby we follow Christ, with whom we shall finde rest to our soules, for loue dealeth not churlishly, it seeketh not his owne, it is not bitter, it thinketh no euill. Therefore as *Paul* intreated the Ephesians, so must I entreate you, that we so walke, as is worthy our vocation, vnto the which we are called, in all modesty, meeknesse, and gentlenesse of minde, bearing with one another through charitie. Oh how vngodly are these clamorous accusations amongst vs, for which many lie in waite, that they might haue any cause to draw their brethren, as it were, starke naked into the presence of the Magistrates, that is, with most impudent and shamelesse vntruthes, to charge and examine them vpon their owne suspitions, neuer thinking on the iniuries they offer vnto them, or looking for the same measure againe at the hands of other. Some there are also, which for euery trifling tarning, will call their neighbours before the Magistrate, delighting in their owne iniuries, the troubles of their friends, the disquietnesse of the Magistrates, and the abuse of the Law; whose impatient constitution calleth for vengeance at the hands of the Lord, and the curse of the land is gone out against them, nothing is wanting, but that the branches of their vnquiet spirit, should be pruned by the sword of Iustice, by them to whom they make their complaints.

9 Secondly, by this example of *Boaz* we gather, that the only cause of bringing suites before the Elders and Magistrates, was the peace and quietnes of the people,

not

not for the kindling, but the quenching of contention before it arole, that the daily brawling, rayling, chiding, and quarrelling, might bee preuented by the wisdome of the Magistrates, for as the Philistims, tooke away all the armour of the Israelites, to keepe them from rebellion: so Magistrates hearing of causes with seueritie and iustice, should take away the instruments of oppressions, and the weapons of contentious persons from the Common-wealth. Thirdly, by this also we gather the diuersitie of proceedings in iudiciall causes in these dayes, and in times past. Then men in their owne persons did pleade in iudgement their owne causes, but now others make gaine of it, then suites were not so tedious, as now they are, then men sought not out such sliding shifts to couer their false-hood, but they did as *as 12* and his kinsman doth, the one simply propoundeth his griefe, and the other gently answered his question, for so should euery one utter the truth indifferently, both to their benefit and damage: then the world was not troubled with writs, fees, or counsellors, but euery man brought his cause and his witness, so the iniury was quickly confessed, easily tried, and speedily remedied: finally, we retaine almost nothing of the ancient manners in this point, but onely the bare and outward names. By the which wee are admonished of humane miserie, for as the world groweth, the troubles thereof are encreased: in the first age they had no warres: in the second age they had no certaine dwellings: in the third age they had no chargeable suits, in the fourth age they had no quietnesse, and euer since warres haue multiplied bloud, one country caried to another, mens lawfull inheritances are taken by violence, the church is spoiled of her libertie, the world of her peace, our bodies of their health, our goods of their continuance, our names of their credit, our corne of encrease, our lands of their fruits, and all our liues of their naturall benefits. Our Saviour shewed vs, that before the end, the loue of many should waxe cold, but surely it is not onely cold,

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but

but frozen in our lamentable age: the Apostle hath shewed vs, that men should be louers of themselves, and louers of pleasures, more then God, when shall these dayes be, if they be not now? may wee not see that euery one taketh for his profit, as the Eagle raueneth for her prey, if they may get house or land, leases or farmes, goods or cattels, money or meate, apparell or ease, they care not though all other lie harbourlesse in the fields, naked in the streets, and pining in their weary and daily labours. Doth not now the Gentleman make more account of his worship, then the worship of God: the Merchant of his profit, then of Iesus Christ: the Husbandman of his fruites, then of the feare of the Lord: the labourer of his wages, then the wealth of his soule: the begger of his almes, then of vnfained deuotion: and euery craftesman of his trade, more then of true Religion: when shall the day of vengeance come? for the Church of God trauelleth with childe of these miseries, and euery day is a thousand till she be deliuered, surely the day cannot be long before the finall remedie appeare.

10 But Boaz said. After he had entred with the land, and the other had granted to redeeme it, hee proceedeth also to the second part of his speech, telling him, if he redeeme it, hee must redeeme it at the hand of *Ruth* the Moabitesse, the wife of the dead, with whom he must marrie, to raise vp the name of the dead vpon his inheritance. This law for a man to marry with the widow of his deceased brother, as it is commanded by the Lord, so it had a speciall regard to many things, first, for the continuance of the first borne in euery family, who were the Lords by the Law, signifying thereby, that Christ the first borne of the Almighty, should remaine with all his Church, like the first borne of this world, to bee the heires of grace for euer and euer. And as he would not suffer any family to want a first borne, because it was the Lords, so not one of the faithfull can be lost, because they are the Lords. Secondly, because it was an Image of the resurrection,

*Dent. 25.*

5.6.



for as a man being dead without issue, his brother taketh his wife, begetteth a sonne, which shall be called the sonne of the deceased, and he which is dead shall liue in him, in as much as his name is reuiued: euen so the body laid dead in the graue, shall be receiued at the last day by the powerfull working of the Almighty, for as the first is wonderfull, so the second is admirable. Thirdly, by this law of subrogation, is signified the great care which the Lord had for the temporall augmenting of every family among the Israelites, and in that, the loue of God in Christ to his Church, that though we die without fruit in barrenesse, yet the Lord will giue vs a name, whereby after a few dayes wee shall liue with him for euer.

11. But in these words wee first of all note, when he saith that he must buy it at the hand of *Ruth* the Moabitess, the wite of the deceased; that one cause, both of the redemption of lands, and marriage of the brother or next heire to the widow, was for the womans or widowes sake, namely, that shee should not be left destitute: for we reade in the Gospell of *Luke*, that barrennes was a great reproch among women in those daies: now wee know that this law was onely for barren widowes, and not for them that were fruitfull, and who would marry with such a woman, whom in his owne heart he feared would be fruitlesse: therefore the Lord to succour these poore desolate widowes, gaue this for a law, that the brother or nearest kinsman to the husbands deceased, should take them to their wiues: where he againe commendeth vnto vs the carefull estate of destitute widowes, if they bee oppressed, wee must ease them: if reiected, we must receiue them: if forsaken, we must comfort them: if reproched, we must acquite them: and finally, if they will marry, they may, yea their owne friends, or the Church must provide them husbands. And seeing the Lord would thus decree by a law, the safeguard of those that were despised, much more would he defend by iudgment the cause of poore fruitfull widowes, the mothers of many children. Now al-

*Luk. 1. 2. 5.*



though we are not bound to this law of marriage, yet wee are tied to doe good to the widowes, for the nature of the Law being long since abrogated, yet the vse thereof remaineth for euer and euer. For maintenance by the word of God must bee allowed them wherewithall they may liue, their husbands being dead. Therefore *Boaz* telleth his kinselman, that hee must redeeme the inheritance, at the hands of *Ruth* the Moabiteffe, because by her marriage, it is made the widowes, the husband dying without issue, like as in this place wee obserue that all the inheritance descendeth to the widow, and therefore shee bestowed her selfe vpon the next of the kindred, who indeede with vs is the heire to all. Therefore by this wee must all learne, but especially the married, or those that intend it hereafter, that it is one especiall ducie of a carefull husband, to prouide before hand for the maintenance of their wiues, that if death neuer so sudden take them away, yet they may not leaue them as many haue done, harbourlesse without house, comfortlesse without friends, and wealthlesse without conuenient maintenance.

12 By this wee see, the commendable assurance of ioyntures and dowries in lands or money, which many parents do wisely take for their daughters, to be a thing allowable by the word of God: yet many offend in the excesse that they wil neuer match where they can haue none, though there be neuer so great hope in time to come, so that wealth and nothing els is the end of most mariages. Then by this wee see condemned, first all those which hauing sufficient, will hardly leaue to their wiues any thing beside that which they cannot keepe from them: and hence it is, that many leaue to their children hundreds and thousands but scant twenties or forties to their helpleffe widowes. Other hauing many children, leaue the greatest part of their wealth to their widowes, through whose youthfull mariages, many times, their whole posteritie is brought to pouerty. But a third sort there are, which minde nothing saue onely marriage,

marriage, and borrow a little for their festiuall day, but afterward let the world sinke or swimme, children without bread, wiues without comfort, themselves as bare as the Grasshopper in winter, and their whole families most pitifully tormented: they repent, though all too late, the children wish they had neuer beene borne, the parents curse the day of their first acquaintance, the family complaine of pouertie, the country of charges, the people of necessity; but they poore silly soules, the innocent infants are left to the mercilesse world, to liue in beggery. Oh that this godly forecast would enter into the minds of many head-long parents, that their liues might be more blessed, their children more happy, their families more contented, the country better furnished, and the poore better succoured, that there might be no complaining in our streets, no leading into captiuitie, and not one feeble person among vs, that our sonnes may bee as the fruitfull garners, and our daughters like the polished corners of the Temple: Oh blessed are the people that be in such a case, yea blessed are the people whose God is the Lord. Then should the name of God be honoured by our liues, and praised in our deathes, when our widowes are provided for, our children maintained, our families nourished, and our soules shall be blessed.

13 *Then the kinsman said.* This second question of marriage being propounded, the kinsman in these words answereth, that hee cannot redeeme the inheritance vpon the condition, and giueth a reason thereof, because then to saue others, hee should destroy his owne, meaning if he had but one childe by *Ruth*, that should bee for *Machlon* her deceased husband, and so his owne name should bee forgotten in his inheritance. Whereby wee see that hee opposeth the feare of the losse of his owne name, against the seuerer commandement of God, and doubteth that if hee follow the Law of God, and custome of the faithfull, his land may lacke an heire, his house a master, and himselfe a sonne. The like vnto this was that of *Sam* the se-

cond son of *Iudah*, when he should haue taken the wife of his deceased brother, would not performe his dutie towards her, but abusing in filthinesse his owne bodie, because he would not benefite his brother, was therefore iustly slaine by the Lord. And I feare that a great many are sicke of the same disease, that loue the world aboue the Word, their land aboue the Law of God, their children more then charitie requireth, who thinke they are borne for no body but onely for themselves: but especially in marriage, they had rather haue the land then the man, the portion then the woman, like this man which was willing to take the inheritance, but vnwilling to marry the widow: for this cause they oppresse both children and widowes, they preferre their priuate gaine, before publike godlinesse, who for their posterity, some are occupied in bribery, some in vsury, some in extortion, and many in vnlawfull bargaining, whose only and chiefe care is for nothing, but that they may die rich: but better is poore *Lazarus* at his death, then all the rich Gluttons in the world; for wealth maketh not to die well, but rather choketh the soule with insatiable care, only Religion is the surest badge of a godly man, whose riches is pouertie, whose pleasure paine, and whose regard is saluation. But this man is well content to giue ouer his right to *Boaz*, wherein surely he doth him a pleasure, but if there had beene any profit in it, he would first haue serued himself: wherein we haue a worthy example of a worldly mind, which granteth all things till it touch his discommoditie: for thus the world wil heare vs preach, till we rebuke their couetousnes, or craue their beneuolence, for euery one will go as faire drie-foot as they can, but none will be wet for the Law of the Lord: that is, so long as we tell them of their faith, exhort them to repentance, perswade them from pleasure, and drunkennesse, but once touch their purses, as *Iohn Baptist* did *Herods* whoredome, then farewell preaching, faith and repentance: but thus much shall suffice for this time. Now let vs giue praise to God.

## The twelfth Lecture.

*Ruth, Chap. 4. verse, 7. 8. 9. 10.*

- 7 *Now this was the manner before time in Israel, concerning the redeeming and changing for to establish all things, a man did luche off his shoe, and gaue it to his neighbour, and this was a sure witnesse in Israel.*
- 8 *Therefore the kinsman said to Boaz, buy it for thee, and he drew off his shoe.*
- 9 *And Boaz said vnto the Elders, and vnto the people, yee are witnesses this day, that I haue bought all that was Elimelechs, and all that was Chilions and Mahlons, of the hand of Naomi.*
- 10 *And moreover, Ruth the Moabiteffe, the wife of Mahlon, haue I bought to be my wife, to sette vp the name of the dead vpon his inheritance, and that the name of the dead be not put out from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place, yee are witnesses this day.*



These words containe the finishing vp of the matter betweene Boaz and his kinsman, how the one resigneth his right to the other, and the knitting vp of the marriage. They consist of two parts: first, a description of the ancient manner of alienation, or changing of titles, rights, and properties, in the sequenth verse, in these words: *Now this was the manner afore time*, &c. to the end of the verse. The second is the manner how this man doth giue ouer, and resigne his right to Boaz, in the eight, ninth, and tenth verses: and containeth two parts, the first respecteth the kinsman in the ninth verse: where first he biddeth Boaz to buy or redeeme it: Secondly, hee draweth off his shooe.

The second part respecteth Boaz, and sheweth how

he receiueth it in the two next verses : wherein first he calleth witnesse of the Elders and people, verse 10. Secondly, he accepteth the proffer, or purchase, which is double : first, the land or inheritance, verse 10. Secondly, the widow or wife of *Machlon*, verse 11. Of these let vs briefly speake in order as they lie, with the assistance of God his Spirit, and the permission of the time.

*Deut. 25. 8.*

*9. 10.*

2 *Now this was.* First of all heere is described the manner of God his people, how in ancient time, they were wont to alienate, or put off their right from one to another, which the holy Ghost setteth downe for the better vnderstanding of that which followeth. And this manner of changing or selling was commanded by the Lord himselfe, as we reade in these words. *Then the Elders of this Citie shall call him and commune with him, if hee stand and say, I will not take her : Then shall his wife come vnto him, in the presence of the Elders, and loose his shooe from his foote, and spit in his face, and answer and say, so shall it bee done to him, that will not builde vp his brothers house. And his name shall be called in Israel, the house of him whose shooe is put off.* In the which words wee note these things : First, that it was the dutie of a woman to complaine of such a man before the Magistrates, as we may see in the seuenth verse. Secondly, that the Magistrates were bound to call and examine such persons, of the causes of their denial. Thirdly, that the woman should pull off the shooe, and also spit in his face, which the Lord did doubtlesse command for the poore comfortlesse womans sake, that no excuse should be admitted of delay, but that they might either be presently receiued, or presently refused : for she which was not fit to day, would not be to morrow, where we gather the great care of the Lord for widowes, which hath warned their friends to provide for them marriages, and armed the Magistrates to defend their weaknes, truly as they which are least accounted in the world, are most esteemed of the Lord, euen so they which are most regarded of the world,

are

are least respected of the Lord : for in this law the Almighty had an especiall eye to the poore, for he knew the wealthy could want no husbands : Whereby we are taught first, to magnifie the goodnesse of the Lord : which as *Marie* saith, looketh vpon the poore degree of his Seruants : and beholdeth the rich a farre off, his delight is in aduancing of them, that are cast downe, and all his lawes defend the causes of the oppressed. Secondly, that we make no light account or reckoning of those whom the Lord in his word doth so highly commend vnto vs : for it is an especiall token of them that shall be saued, that they make much of them that feare the Lord : what though they be as poore as *Lazarus*, and neuer so contemptible in the eye of the world: yet it is a thousand times more commendable to bee friendly to such, then to all the rich Gluttons of the world, but of this point we haue spoken before, and it is sufficient to touch it now.

3 Secondly, by this wee also note, that if there bee any iniurie done to the Children by the Parents, or to Widdowes, by their Friends in their marriages, it is lawfull for them to appeale to the Magistrates : As for example, if the Parents would force their Children, either not to marrie at all, or else to marrie against their mindes, rather then to yetld to either of both, they may and ought to sue to the Magistrate. The which as it was lawfull for the Iewes by this law here mentioned, euen so it is left to vs to imitate, although the ceremoniall vse of it be ceased, which consisted only in their Brothers marriage, and as long as Magistrates are, so long the true vse of it remayneth, as it doth in many others. Yet although the Gospel speake not of it, because it is a thing so farre against nature, yet it commandeth, that they which doe euill, should feare the Sword of the Magistrate, because he beareth it not in vaine : and morcouer, it is flatly against the Gospel, that any should doe vnto other, which they would not haue done to themselues : much more this forcible dealing with Friends or Children : And if it be lawfull  
for

*Luc. 1. 43.*

*Psal. 15. 4.*  
*Luc. 16. 29.*

*Rom. 13. 1. 4*  
*Mat. 7. 12.*



for the wife or husband to flie to the Magistrate in priuate iniuries, much more for the children, which are weaker, and therefore need more helpe. This I speake, not to stirre vp the mindes of any against their Parents, but with the Apostle I exhort and command that eue-ry one obey their Parents in all things lawfull: for he is accursed that doth otherwise, but to this end I vtter it, that wee may know what is lawfull, and what is vn-lawfull: for the same God which hath commanded that Parents should bring their vnruely Sonnes and Daugh-ters for to be punished, willeth also that they which doe any hurt to their children, either in soule, to draw them from the Lord, or in body, as in vnlawfull or vn-godly mariages, in vnlawfull and vngodly actions, their only refuge should be to the Minister of God, the law-ful Magistrate, to whom they owe more obedience then to their owne Parents. Therefore, *Paul* willeth Parents, that they prouoke not their children to wrath, which is by their tyrannous commandements to binde their consciences, and their cruell authoritie to mur-ther their mindes: For if a priuate subiect may sue a-against the Prince, and craue the law, much more a Sonne or a Daughter, being griued by their Parents: The vse of this doctrine is to teach and instruct vs, first what dutie we owe to the Magistrates, who haue greater care and charge ouer vs for the peace of our Coun-trie, and publike welfare, then Parents for our main-tenance, and priuate obedience: therefore *Paul* wil-leth to pray and giue thanks for the Magistrates, that vnder them we may liue godly and quiet liues, for that is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Sauour, whereby wee may iustly complaine of the slacknesse of our unhappy age, wherein men murmur and grudge at any charge which ariseth for our Prince, but especially that there are so few, which in all their liues haue prayed for Prince or Magistrates, and if they haue, it was but a wish and no more, that they might liue in peace to gather wealth, not in godlinesse, for the pro-fit of their soules: Againe, by this all Parents must bee

1. Tim. 2. 2.

13.

instructed; how to deale with their children, that they raigne not like Gods ouer the fruits of their bodies, but increase them in meekenesse, being of yeares of discretion, like their fellow Heires of God his Kingdome: euen as they will answere to the Almighty, who gaue them such issue, and to the lawes of our Prince, that requireth account of them, for the chiefest stroke lieth not in them, but in those that gouerne both Church and Common-wealth, and wee haue alreadie shewed that in some causes, it is a glorie for their children, to decline from their counsell: Lastly, all children must herein also bee schooled, that with all reuerence they submit themselues to the aduice of their Parents: but especially like free men in Christ: they listen alway what the word of God saith: for that must bee their Iudge, and Parents also, when it shall not goe for payment, that they did it for feare of their friends: but they which feare them more then God, shall with them be excludet for euer from God: and let vs euermore giue thanks to the Almighty, which thus prouideth for our miserie, to defend our innocencie, that if wee bee in one place oppressed, we may be redressed in another, appointing Courts of appeale from our owne Parents, to his owne Magistrates.

4 Thirdly, by this also vve obserue and note, vwhen hee saith, that this vvas a sure vvitnesse in Israel, that it is a thing required in our religion, that of our publike affaires there may bee publike testimonies, as for example, our Purchasing, Buying, or Selling, ought by Religion and the feare of God, to bee done with open and publike vvitnesse, for the better assurance to buyers and sellers, to auoide deceit to the one, and couetousnesse in the other, and therefore it vvas said in the Law, that vnder the vvitnesse of two or three shall euery vvord stand. And further also, there must bee some outward signe to seale vp the matter, in this place here is the putting off the shooe, which signifieth possession, and dispossession againe, the rendering of a mans right to him that hath it. Therefore, in some places

Gen. 23. 17

Gen. 31. 52  
1. Thes. 4. 6.

places there is vsed striking of hands, as the shutting and making vp of bargaines and couenants, and who knoweth not that in the purchase of Land, there is seisin and deliuerie by a peece of earth and a twigge; of houses, all goe forth and the buyer entreth in alone, and there abideth, and this I may say, is a sure testimonie in Eng'land. But you would know why the Lord beside the record of the Magistrate, required so outward and open signes: To which I answere, hee did it for this cause, that the simplest among them might not be deceiued, but might haue that as the euidence of his possession for euermore: witnesse faileth, Magistrates die, people are vnconstant, yea, and some will falsly sweare and witnesse to any vntruth, yet the shoore remayned an euerlasting testimonie. Therefore among vs there is writing and seale, by the which things are confirmed, which passed many ages agoe, and this was taken from the ancient vsage, wherein mens names were entred in brasie and stone, and the quantitie of their possessions described. Therefore doth the holy Ghost so precisely set downe the purchase which *Abraham* made with *Ephron*: where the Field is named, the borders and bounds of it are described, the Cause is mentioned, and the very trees that grew in the same, are made sure vnto him, the like may bee said of the stones in Mount Gilead, that *Iacob* reared as a witnesse betweene him and *Laban*, and many other which serue to this end, that as *Paul* saith; Wee should not defraude one another: for if hee were accursed that remoued the Land marke of his Neighbour, what shall they bee which get marks and Lands both, some by deceiuing, some by forged euidence, other by false witnesse, and some force their Neighbours, will they, nill they, to depart from their dwellings and possessions, and to leaue them for little or nothing in the clawes of these cormorants, their great possessions require great accounts, and I feare mee, when that day shall come, they will be as readie to restore, as euer *Iudas* was, but it shall bee too late  
and

and without fruit, for the sentence is already pronounced, that fire shall consume their dwellings, and their Children or Posteritie shall bee Vagabonds, but the righteous shall haue their Land in possessions.

5 Therefore the Kinsman. The Verse sheweth how the right was resigned, first the Kinsman giueth Boaz authoritie, when hee biddeth him buy it for himselfe: and secondly, hee renounceth his owne, when hee pulleth off his shooe. Where first of all it may be demanded, why doth hee pluck off his owne shooe? seeing by the Law the Woman should doe it, and also spit in his face; as wee haue heard already, vnto which I briefly answer: First, the Law before said, wherein the Woman was bound to pluck off the shooe; and to spit in her Kinsmans face, was for such, as utterly denied both to redeeme the inheritance, and to marrie the Widdow, as also that would not prouide any substitute to doe it in their behalte: but this Kinsman of Naomies, got Boaz to redeeme his right, as wee may see in the sixt Verse of this Chapter, in these wordes redeeme my right to thee: Therefore that ceremonie was needefulle: Secondly, I answere, that the woman by the Law was bound to complaine to the Magistrates: but neither Naomi nor Ruth did make any complaint, saue only a priuate Petition vnto Boaz, for to marrie her in his owne behalte: and therefore the matter being confessed before the complaint, as hee was willing to release his title vnto Boaz, who was ready to receiue it, so with lesse rigour the law was executed vpon him: for a penitent offendour is worthy of most fauour. Thirdly, neither Naomi nor Ruth were present when this matter was in hearing, because they were vncertaine of their Kinsmans minde, who if he had granted, it had been immodesty for them, seeing they neuer asked him before, & if he denied as he did, by their presence they should seeme to distrust the promise which Boaz made to Ruth: but seeing the content of Naomi and Ruth was yielded to Boaz, and that being but the

Mat. 5. 25.

the first motion, they needed not to be present, and the matter at the first confessed, was at the beginning dispatched: Out of the which we first obserue, that it is a point of godlinesse, and worthy of friendship, that in our sutes we should at the first confesse our oppressions: if we haue done any; I know many will commit their vniust dealing to the triall of the Law, looking for a doubtfull issue of the same: and will say, if I bee condemned, the charge is but the more to my selfe, but I reply and say, why doest thou not confesse thy folly, and the iniurie which thou hast done, and saue the charges which thou spendest in the triall, thou doest but adde murder to thy malice, drunkenness to thy thirst, and prodigalitie to thy couetousnesse: Thou hast already robbed thy Neighbour, by thy oppression, now thou wilt spoile the Lord, of those his goods, whereof he hath made thee Steward, by consuming them in law to defend thy iniuries. Follow the counsell of the Lord, agree with thy aduersarie quickly, whilest thou art in the way with him, least hee complaine of thee to the Iudge, and the Iudge deliuer thee to the Iaylor, and so forth: Let wise men end your matters at home, abide not the verdict of the Law, it is too costly, for as you are accomptable to your Neighbour for the vttermost farthing, so you shall be answerable to the Lord for euery mite, you haue mispent, when the very mony you haue laid out shall rise in iudgement against you, to condemne your contentions.

6 Secondly, wee note here in *Naomi* and *Ruth*: an excellent example of a godly mind: for if *Naomi* would, shee might haue dealt with her Kinsman, and he denying, shee might haue done him al the disgrace set downe in the Law, to haue pulled off his shooe, to haue spit in his face, to haue defamed him and his house for euer: but shee dealeth not so, shee would not reuenge one iniurie by another, shee maketh the matter sure before hand, that if hee refused, *Ruth* might bee married, and the other not disgraced: So deare is the name and credit of ones Neighbour to a godly person, that they will  
aduenture

aduenture their owne losse and hinderance, to saue the honestie of other. Therefore, saith *Peter*, it is the glorie of a man to passe by the infirmities of his brother, *Ioseph* might haue disclosed the lusts of his Mistris, and saued his owne imprisonment : but hee concealed it which wrought first his miserie, and then his felicitie. But, oh how few are there like *Ioseph* in our dayes, which hauing their Brethren at aduantages, will not to their vttermost accuse them ! Wee haue many *Zibaes*, which accuse poore *Mephibosheth* to *Dauid*, with gifts and with bribes, pretending simplicitie, with wordes sweeter then honie: when warre is in their hearts, their lips haue learned their flattering stile, they are of their Father, that old accuser of God his children, but as he is cast downe, so they shall bee condemned, yea, euen then when it is no benefit to them, how doth it reioyce them to see their Neighbours imprisoned, their enemies slandered, their possessions remoued, their wealth diminished, their credit abated, and they deprived of friends and fauour at one time.

7 Is this the thing that you would haue them doe to you ? might not the Lord haue suffered him to stand, and cast downe you, that hee might haue laughed at your destruction. Consider your selues, beloued in the Lord, and let vs be the Schollers of this godly *Naomi*, if we may get our owne with faire speeches, let vs not vse these threatning words : If wee must hide the truth for the benefit of our Neighbours, much lesse must we conceale falshood, that not one word of disgrace be vttered to the discredit of our Neighbours. Oh that those which contend with their Neighbours would be instructed in this doctrine, how much would it moderate their malice, for the benefit of their aduersaries, and bring peace vnto both, neuer to be repented of ? Wherefore lay a-side all malicioufnesse and guile, dissimulation, enuie, and all euill speaking, as innocent and new borne Babes : and let vs desire the sincere milke of the word of God, that we may grow to bee perfect men in Iesus Christ, that as hee suffered and gaue no answer, being

Gen. 39. 17

2. Sam. 16.  
3-Rev. 12. 10.  
Iob. 1. 10.

1. Pet. 2. 1, 2



being led as a sheep before the shearer, which openeth not his mouth : hauing many causes to alleage against his aduersaries, yet in silence endured both their iudgment and reproches, that we with the same lenitie and meekenesse, should forgiue other, euen as he hath forgiven vs.

§ Thirdly, by this also wee obserue that the lawes both of God and Men, bee they neuer so sharpe, yet in some causes they may be moderated, according to the discretion of the Magistrate, especially when they respect priuate persons. In this place the spitting on the face, and the disgracing of the name of the man is omitted: which the Magistrates might haue constrained, if they pleased: neither are they to be blamed, for the partie which was most grieued, by this deniall was best pleased, neither did thee call for extremitie. And as Christ would not in his iudgement, condemne or accuse the woman taken in adulterie, but bid her sinne no more, euen so the rigour of the Law is not to be executed vpon euery offender, but where hope of amendment is, there may bee a testimonie of fauour. This is a worthy doctrine for our daies, wherein men lie in wait as the Dragons doe for the Elephants, to get their Brethren within the compasse of the law, and though God his word and their owne conscience condemne them, yet if the law say it, depriue men of their liuings, Christians of their libertie, seruants of their freedome, in the seruice of God, Parents of their children, wiues of their husbands, Churches of their Preachers, and no man dare open his mouth for them, that if Christ himselfe were on the earth againe in his humane shape, they neede no other argument but this: we haue a Law, and by our Law hee ought to die: But woe bee vnto you saith the Prophet, that vrge the lawes of Omri, that is, which dare maintayne the decrees of Princes against any of the Lords Seruants: Surely, it is an argument that men feare the creature about the Creatour, which will not bee drawne from their lawes, bee they neuer so childish: but in our

daies

Iob. 9. 1.

Mich. 6. 6.

dayes it is most lamentable, that any good Lawes should bee wrested against the course of the Gospell, which were made for the enlarging thereof, such as is the forcing of men to abide with dumbe Ministers, when the Gospell preached, calleth for them at the next Church: But I speake not one word against lawfull authoritie, or against the law, but only the partialitie of the Executioners thereof, is worthy of blame, many times punishing seuerely, where is no, or little offence, and pardoning by sufferance notorious blasphemers. But let no Magistrates thinke when they may mitigate offences, that they may altogether burie the force of the law, when they shut their eares against the crie of them that complaine, or execute it not for fauour or friendship: But on the contrarie, they must not in matters of iudgement repell any information or euidence: but if the partie grieued require extremitie, by wildome they may perswade him, but by authoritie they cannot denie him: finally, in all things consider with the Apostle, not only what is lawfull, but also what is expedient, that charitie being ioyned with authoritie, loue may rather amend our faults, then law, and seueritie put vnto iustice, the greatest faults may haue the sharpest punishments, that not the wordes, but the minde of the Law-maker may bee euer considered.

9 And Boaz said vnto the Elders. Now the ceremonie being ended, the resignation deliuered, the holy Ghost proceedeth to expresse how Boaz receiued it, where hee first of all calleth witnesse of the Elders, and of the People, that now hee hath bought the inheritance of *Eliemelech*, and whatsoever was *Mahlons*, and whatsoever was *Chilions*, hee hath bought at the hand of *Raimi*: So that here hee testifieth with the witnesse before said, that it shall bee as his owne in possession for euer.

Where first of all here commeth in question whether then it were, or now is lawfull to sell inheritances, which by this place appeareth to bee very lawfull:

1. King. 21.

3.

Leui. 25. 23

seeing Boaz buyeth that which was *Elimelechs*: and if it be so lawfull, then was *Naboath* in great fault, that hee did not depart from his in *Iezreel*: and so might haue saued his life. But *Naboath* had the expresse law of God on his side, which commanded that the Land should not be sold to be cut off from any Familie: and giueth this reason of it, because they were but strangers in the Land, and sojourners, but the fee-simple (as we call it) was only the Lords: Therefore *Naboath* was not wrong, but had the Law of God for his defence: nor yet *Boaz* did not amisse, which bought *Elimelechs* possession, or inheritance of *Naomi*. Therefore, wee must briefly set downe the conditions of sale, as they may be gathered out of the Law of God.

Leuit. 25.

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10 First, therefore these are the words: *If thy Brother be impouershed, and sell his possession, then his Redeemer shall come, even his neare Kinsman, and buy out that which his Brother hath sold: And if he haue no redeemer, but his hand hath gotten to buy it out. Then shall hee count the yeares of his sale, and restore the ouerplus to whom he sold it: so shall he returne to his possession. But if he cannot get sufficient to restore to him, then that, which is sold, shall remaine in his hand that bought it, untill the yeare of Iubilee: and in the Iubilee it shall come out, and hee shall returne to his possession.*

Out of these wordes wee gather these Propositions for certaine truth. First, that for pouertie it was lawfull for men to sell away their inheritance: Secondly, that the next Kinsman might redeeme it, and no man else beside him that sold it: and they might at any time redeeme it, neither could the Possessor denie him. Thirdly, that no sale of any Land was good or effectual for any time after the yeare of Iubilee: By these three conclusions wee may trie the Title: *Naomi* was now impouershed, and therefore shee might sell her inheritance to whom shee pleased, *Boaz* was by substitution, the next Kinsman, therefore he might lawfully buy it: for *Naboath*, he was neither poore nor wanted, neither was *Ahab* any of his kindred, and if it had once

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got into the Kings inheritance, who could euer haue required it againe?

Therefore *Naboth* was without blame in denying to sell his Vineyard, and *Boaz* without fault and blame for buying of *Naomies*: And *Boaz* knew that he had the consent of the Seller, and therefore hee was the bolder. Then by this we may gather, in what cause it is lawfull to buy or sell ones inheritance.

11 First, it is lawfull to buy with the consent and good will of him that selleth: so we reade how *Abraham* bought a Field of *Ephron*, after he had first communed with his Sonnes, and had their liking of his sute, and after at the gate of the Citie, he had his assurance, and without this it is not lawfull at all to deale, for except the will bee free and not compelled, it is no bargaine before the Lord, but plaine robberie, & vniust disposing, because in the last commandement the Lord saith, Thou shalt not couet thy Neighbours Field, or his House, or his Oxe, or his Ass, or any thing that is his, wheteby is forbidden euery thought of couetousnesse, much more forcible and vniust dealing to compel men to depart from their inheritance. Therefore *Ahab* was blamed by *Elijah* (though only *Iezabel* wrought the murder) because he knew it was forcible dealing, and hee ought not to haue entred, seeing the meanes of his death. But how many constrained purchases are there made, the Lord only knoweth, and the Countrey euery where ringeth of them, where many by one meanes or other, are driuen to depart from their patrimonies, are left destitute of dwelling places, Wiues without maintenance, Children without inheritance, Families brought to pouertie, by such daily and viuall purchasing.

12 Secondly, it is lawfull to buy if it bee publicly done, not only for the conueyance or assurance, but also for the price: Therefore *Ephron* made *Abraham* the price of foure hundred shekels, in the gate of the Citie, and here *Boaz* doth it before the Elders. This is a most worthy consideration, because by the neglect of

Gen. 23. 17

this point it commeth to passe, that great livings are done away for a song, as the Prouerbe is, yong men priuately sell their patrimonies, their Fathers being aliue, for little or nothing: others which haue not so much worldly wit, as were to bee wished, make priuate bargaines of their Lands, when they are in want or pouertie, wherein they sell them halfe for nothing. And thus yong men are deceiued with the sight of a little gold, vnwise and vnthristie persons are cosoned, with nothing in regard of the value of their inheritance, Widdowes left comfortlesse, Children left harbourlesse, and the Countie troubled and pestred with such couetous encrochers, and why? because they make subtil and deceitfull bargaines in secret, whereof they would be ashamed, if either before Iudges, Elders, or Magistrates, this sale were propounded. Therefore, by the rule of God his word, we hold him a Theefe and a Robber, which hath thus bought to the hinderance of the Seller.

Gen. 33. 19

13 Thirdly, it is lawfull to buy for necessitie, house, or Lands, or any other thing lawfull to bee sold, the former conditions alwayes obserued, but it must not be for vaine-glorie, or for the aduancing of their children or posteritie, or that they might be Land-Lords to many: Not euery one that is wealthy, and hath much monie, must alway purchase Land: the former example of *Abraham* proueth this: who being a very wealthie man: yet he neuer offered to buy any Land, till *Sara* his Wife was dead, and that was for necessitie to burie her in. So did *Iacob* his Sonne buy a parcell of Land of *Hemor*, the Father of *Shechem*, for an hundred peeces of silver, whereon hee pitched his Tent, and builded an Altar: Hee might haue bought and purchased much more, as hee was able, but hee would not, only a dwelling place and an Altar roome hee provided: surely, wee haue an infinite and great number that buy dwelling places, but few that giue any of their Lands or Liuing to build Altars or Churches on: Nay, who seeth not how men sue daily to pull downe  
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the Altars, and to make arrable Land where they stand, that is, they pull Personages and Spirituall livings to their nests, they get away Tithes and Oblations, they enter vpon the Lands and profits of the Ministerie, and, I thinke verily, in many places they are grieved that the Churches and Church-yards are so bigge, because they would haue the more profit, these persons, I warrant you, are none of *Jacobs* children, nor *Abrahams* neither, which haue taken to themselves the houses of God in possession. Against these the Prophet cryeth, Woe bee vnto them that ioyne house to house, and field to field, that there might bee no more place, that yee may be placed by your selues in the middest of the earth: therefore heare their punishment. This, saith the Lord, is in my eares, surely many houses shall bee desolate, euen great and faire houses without inhabitants. This shall bee the end of these couetous cormorants, who desire to be the Lords of the earth: And if good King *Dauids* Posteritie, within a thousand yeares after him, had not one house to lodge in, but euen in the same, which was their fathers: *Ioseph* and *Marie* were faine to harbour in the stables, feare not you, but your Posteritie will bee beggered within a hundred yeares after you, which neither are so wealthie, or so godly as *Dauid* was, but I may sooner powre out my very heart, then make any forsake their purchasing, so louing a sin is the desire of wealth, that men choose it with aboundance here for a season, and damnation there for euer, but let the godly vse the world, as if they vsed it not, for the desire of monie is the roote of all euill.

14 But now we haue laboured for the buyers, whom I know will bee more caretull of their profit, then my instruction, let vs in a word direct the Sellers also before we goe from this point. If any demand wherefore, or for what causes they ought, or it may bee lawfull for them to sell their possessions, I answer briefly, for these causes a man may, and for none else. First, to relieue his pouertie, and being in sicknesse, for to recouer his

Isa. 5. 8. 9.



Gen. 47. 18

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Mark. 5. 25.

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2. Sam. 24.

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health being imprisoned for some good cause or lawfull debt, being taken a captiue, to pay his ransome, or suchlike, all this is vnderstood by the name of pouer- tie, or any other meanes whereby a man may come into pouer- tie: for the Lord which gaue inheritances, gaue them for the benefit of the Possessours, that they might bee helps vnto them in this miserable life, for they must euer esteeme more of their life, then of their lands, of their libertie, then their inheritance, of their wel- fare and health, then riches or wealth, and there- fore the Lord permitted the Iewes to doe away their inheritance: and mention is made of a godly woman in the Gospell, that had spent all the substance shee had vpon Phisicians, which is reported to magnifie the goodnesse of our Sauour vnto her, which cured her for nothing, and deterred to helpe her, till shee had spent all, that shee might account more of her health, then her wealth, of the kindnesse of Christ, then the cunning of the Phisicians, but I need not many reasons to proue this, and therefore I will leaue it.

15 Secondly, a man may lawfully depart with some of his inheritance, to helpe him that hath none at all, either to sell it, or giue it. So did Ephron sell Macpelah to Abraham that had none, so did Hemor sell a parcell of Land to Jacob that had none, and vnto this I may re- ferre the threshing floore of Araunah, which David bought to build an Altar on, when the Lord stayed the plague, after he had numbred the people, this was to speciall vse, and therefore for some speciall causes, I thinke it lawfull for men to giue or sell their inheri- tance. By this we learne what to iudge of them, which are so farre from giuing or selling, that it is a heart- fore vnto them, to see such goodly Hospitalls and Almes houses erected for the poore, although not of their cost, yet to their griefe, for they had rather be sat- ted with the Rent of the houses, then poore and mile- rable maymed people should bee fed with the reuen- nues: these persons thinke nothing well spent, but that which is bestowed in surfeiting and pleasures, in costly

costly apparell and daintie fare, thinking the time long till these poore almes-mens gownes be turned into velvet coates, but I pray God their possessions may bee Hospitals, not Hospitalls their possessions. Other thinke much if a poore body get a litle Cottage to be builded vpon the Commons or waste grounds, they had rather haue sties for their Swine, then dwellings for such destitute soules: surely let them take heede, that their owne sties, I meane their houses, wherein such fat hogs as themselves are, liuing in pleasure and in follies, bee not made worse then the silly houell of the other, and God curse them and their posteritie, because they haue hated him in his pouertie: for if he which giueth to the poore, doe lend to the Lord, then hee which reuileth the poore, reuileth (or as *Salomon* saith) scorneth his maker, then hee which taketh from the poore shall rob the Lord, and sure his iudgement shall be very seuerer, and his damnation very swift.

16 Thirdly, it is lawfull to sell inheritances, and to bestow or employ the money vpon the Church, so we reade of the primitiue Church, how they which had land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it downe at the Apostles feet, and therefore is that excellent and fearefull Historie of *Ananias* and *Saphira* his Wife, who keeping back but a part of the money that was their owne, and confirming it with a lie, were sodainly stroked dead. I would to God the Niggards of our age would consider this, which would depriue the poore of that which they owe them, and pluck from Church and Ministerie, that which is giuen them. But of this latter disease, few are sick in our dayes, that they will sell their Land to giue to the Church, rather spend it in gluttonie for their belly, then liberalitie for their soule; in good fellowship among Ruffians, then Christian charitie among the faithfull, cloathing themselves about their cailing, that for a season they may lye like Gentlemen, and euer after in woruld slauerie: these singing fooles or all other are most miserable, for their friends will not comfort them, their fellowes will

A. 2. 45

for sake them, their wealth will decay, but their woe shall be euerlasting.

Lastly, by this Verse we note, that Women and Widdowes had the rule of their husbands inheritances, if they dyed without Heires, for here it is said, that *Boaz* buyeth it at the hand of *Naomi*, because shee was her husbands Heire, and being past child-bearing, had giuen ouer her right to *Ruth*: this wee haue already shewed you, was the singular care which the Lord hath ouer poore desolate Widdowes, that they should not bee despised, although they were barren, and therefore, for their better preferment, willed the inheritance to descend vnto them: whereby we may see it is no new thing that women should be Inheritors, for the Daughters of *Iob* had inheritances among their Brethren, the Daughters of *Zelophead* had their Fathers lot, and *Caleb* giueth his Daughter *Asah* with an inheritance vnto his Kinsman *Othniel*, which may suffice for prooofe of this matter, for the perpetuities of inheritances, are condemned by God and Man: but I would to God that the wealth of many women were not their vndoing, and their riches the cause of their casting away, especially where friends haue aspiring mindes, there the miserie of Maidens and Widdowes falleth in nothing sooner, for setting them aloft with wealthy portions, and forgetting what they are in nature, their riches fall to vnthrifts, and themselves to lamentable want.

17 And moreover. After the lands, he descendeth to his marriage, which is described in this Verse: wherein he protesteth that he taketh the lands, that he might also marrie with the woman, and he marieth the woman for no other cause, but to stirre vp the name of the Dead, according to the commandement of God: for what else should moue an old man, to doe that in his withered age, which he refused in his lustie youth? By the which wee first of all note, how wisely *Naomi* dealt with her husbands inheritance: she might haue kept it to get her selfe a good marriage, yet shee giueth it to

*Ruth*:

*Iob. 12. 15.*

*Numb. 36.*

67.

*Iud. 1. 13. 4.*

*Ruth*: shee might haue sold it to fill her purse, but shee bestoweth it to preferre her daughter. Wherein shee teacheth vs, with what loue we must doe for our children, namely, that for them we must depart with our owne maintenance, and vnto their good, not onely to the vttermost, but also beyond our power. And this is vvorthis to bee noted of vvidowes vvhich are wealthily left by their husbands, who are wont but little to care for their children, but to bestow their goods vpon youthfull companions: see heere this *Naomi* hauing but a daughter in law, shee giueth her the whole inheritance, as if shee had beene borne for it: and truly, the onely cause (in regard of our selues) of all our wealth, is, that we might bestow it vpon our children: how grievous is it in many places, to see both lands and liuings consumed by them, which neuer sweat for them, and many poore children, to whom of right they do pertain, to be destitute both of friends and maintenance, and all through the wanton mariages of their youthfull mothers: but of this matter we haue spoken already, and shall be sufficient to remember at this time.

18 Secondly, by this we may gather, that a marriage was a meere ciuill action, because in the finishing thereof, there was not vsed either Priest or Leuite, as we may see in this place, but is only pronounced by the man in the presence of the Elders, euen in the place of iudgement. Hence it commeth, that in ancient time we reade of mariages, but neuer celebrated in Churches, but in priuate assemblies, except Princes, which were wont to make great and generall feastes. For this institution that mariages should be kept in Churches, came vp of late, many hundred yeares since the dayes of the Apostles: but yet must not be disanulled, but obserued as a holy and commendable order: first, for the auoyding of confusion, that those which are fit, might bee ioyned together before the faithfull: secondly, for the more honour of the estate of matrimonic, that they might know it was with all reuerence to be vndertaken,

*Marriage  
was first  
brought in-  
to the  
Church in  
the yeare of  
Christ,  
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ken, seeing they came, as it were, before the face of the Almighty, there to be vnited. Thirdly, that they might bee begunne with most earnest and feruent prayers, and thereupon came the Ministers to haue a hand in it. Fourthly, that it might be publikely knowne among all the congregation. Fifthly, that those marriages which were priuately kept and concluded, might be accounted suspitious and vnlawfull. Wherefore we must not in any wise breake this godly order of the Church of God: for if it was lawfull for the godly in old time to keepe them in houses, much more may the company of the faithfull now celebrate them in Churches, alwayes remembering, that we make it no article of our Faith, but hold it necessarie only for order and vnitie.

19 Thirdly, by this we also obserue the end of all mariages, which is first for the commandement of God, and secondly for the encrease of the Church. Both these are heere set downe by Boaz in these words, *To stirre vp the name of the dead vpon his inheritance, and that the name of the dead be not put out from among his brethren.* This was the speciall commandement of God, that he should marrie his kinsmans wife, and raise vp seed to his kinsman, which was, as wee lately shewed you, for the multiplying of the Church. By the which we may examine all the intentions of marriage, whatsoeuer. First, if we doe not take it in hand for the commandement of God, what hope can they euer haue of the blessing of the Lord vpon them; like as a labourer vvhich setteth himselfe to another mans vyork vwith- out his consent, hath nothing for his paines: euen so all they, whatsoeuer they be, vvhich haue married of their owne braine, vwithout respect to the Law of God, can neuer haue, or craue any blessing of the Lord, vpon themselues or their posteritie: Oh fearesull consideration, vworthie to be considered of all them, vvhich vn- aduisedly go about to marrie; for a wilde tree bringeth forth sowre fruit, and wicked parents which haue no regard of holinesse in their mariages, do seldome bring any

any vvholefome fruit to the Lord. But ſome vwill ſay, howv ſhall vve knovv howv, or in vvhat ſort to behaue our ſelues, that before vvee marrie, vvee may aime at nothing beſide the commandement of God? Hearken a little, and I will briefly inſtruct you out of the word of God.

20 Firſt of all, the care of thoſe that vwill be married, muſt be for the only bleſſing of God, which is the very finall cauſe of this inſtitution. Therefore after the Flood, the Lord in the reſtoring of all things, amongſt other confirming marriage: *Mofes ſaith, And bee bleſſed Noah and his ſons, and ſaid, Encreaſe and multiply*: ſo that they which looke for any encreaſe or fruit of their marriage, muſt firſt of all bee aſſured that the Lord hath bleſſed them. But howv ſhall vve obtaine this bleſſing of God? I anſwere, by diligent reading of his Word, and by prayer. *David* asking this queſtion, wherewithall a yong man ſhall cleaſe his vvay? and then he anſwereth himſelfe, and ſaith. euen by taking heed vnto thy vvord. And *Paul* ſaith, that the vnmarried care for the things that pleaſe the Lord, as if he had ſaid, they muſt remaine vnmarried for no other cauſe, but that they might the more freely giue themſelues to the ſervice of God. If a man want faith, he may obtaine it by praier, and if he vvant the bleſſing of God vpon his marriage, vvhich is a leſſe thing then faith: may he not obtaine it by prayer? *Iſa* c hauing been married twenty yeares, yet was without children, and then he prayed for iſſue, and the Lord gaue him two at one time: and may not prayer obtaine this for the vnmarried, as vvell as for the married? Yes verily, if either would take the paines to vie it. But oh vvho are they that euer in their liues once offered vp their prayers to God, to bleſſe them vvith vvives and husbands: that is, that they might be ſo married, as the name of God might bee glorified by them. Nay, what yong man or vvoman among a thouſand in theſe dayes, that is delighted with either praier or preaching, but rather affect libertie, pleaſure, and paſtime, they neuer thinke of any need they ſtand of theſe

*Gen. 9. 17.*

*Pſal. 119. 9.*

*1. Cor. 7. 34*

*Gen. 25. 21.*  
22.



these things, but rather imagine that their youthfull dayes and yeares must be consumed in riotous sports, and wanton wandrings, so that most men and maidens come by their wiues and husbands at feasting and dancing, by dallying and playing, chosen by outward apparell, not inward and secret vertues, vvhich are vvonne vvith vanitie, kept with pride, and forsaken to the destruction of wiues and husbands, therefore first seeke the kingdome of God, and the righteousness thereof, and all other things shall be cast vpon you.

*1. Pet. 3. 7.*

*Ephes. 5. 59*

21 Secondly, the intention of them that marry for the commandment of God, is that thereby they might liue more soberly in their seuerall vocations; for as the wanton oxe is bridled in the yoke, so vnruled youth is gouerned by marriage, for if wee regard the minde of them that marrie, it is stayed vpon one, if the company of the bodie, it is bound to one, if life, it cannot bee solitarie, if wealth, it must not bee possessed alone, Therefore *Peter* said, husbands dwell vvith your wiues like men of knowledge; as if hee had said, in your vnmarried time you were wanderers, but now you are married, you are dwellers; in your vnmarried age you were inconstant, but now you are married, you are as vnmoueable as a house: when you were single, you were ignorant, but now you be married, bee men of knowledge: and finally, when you were yong, you were troubled with the desire of many, but now you are married, you are comforted with the loue of one, and as a man without a dwelling place, so is the vnmarried without a companion. Such is the commoditie of marriage, if it bee duely considered, and each partie rightly instructed, that it is as sleepe to a weary man, as wine to the thirsty, as a house to the harbourlesse, and as a garment against winter: and therefore it is compared to the fellowship of Christ with his Church. How then commeth it to passe, that men liue more riotously being married, then when they are vnmarried, for they amend nothing, but think all things as lawfull for them then,

then, as it was before, their houses without their presence, their wiues without their company, their families without their gouernment, so that you shall see married persons wandring abroad, as if they were vnmarried, disposing themselves as shamefully and as loosely as any in the world: not liuing in sobrietie and modesty, like the Turtle Doue, but in gaming and dancing like the wanton Goate; these parties neuer married for the Commandement of God; but some rash desire possessed their mindes, and a little youthfull lust tickled their fancies, much like the fauour of Iuniper, which continueth but a little while. Other are so farre from this point to marrie, that they might liue more soberly, that they make their marriages the couer of their dishonestie, making the world beleue they liue in perfect chastitie, because they are married, but priuily they giue themselves to most filthie adulteries: but the Apostle saith, marriage is honorable, but adulterers God will iudge, that is, will vtterly condemne; and if their behauiours were well examined, you should finde this the cause, that their houses cannot hold them. The filthinesse of these parties is condemned by the very brute beasts, and shall bee punished by the seuerer iudgement of God: for they vvhich make the members of Christ the members of harlots, shall bee vvith harlots the members of the Diuell: therefore marrie for modestie, not for filthinesse, that your vngouerned age may be bridled with the consideration of your present estate, your wearied dayes may be quieted in the bed of godly, holy, and honorable mariage.

23 Thirdly, they which marry for obedience vnto God, must only mind godly and not wealthy matches, they must looke on the heart, not on the face, they must waigh the disposition, and not the riches, they must not say, as the Diuell said to Christ, All this vvill I giue: but they must say, as Iacobs sonnes said to Shechem and Hemor, If you vvill bee Circumcised, you shall haue our sister: that is, if you feare God, and receiue

Hebr. 13. 4.

Mat. 4.  
Gen. 34. 15

ceiue his true knowledge, if you loue his Word, and honor his Sacraments, if you can benefit the soules as well as the bodies: But a man may weary himselfe many dayes, before he finde any part of this inclination, for parents will deny their consents, if they see not the riches for their daughters husbands, or sonnes wiues, keeping them in continuall burning, for lacke of this wealthie liquour: and I know many parents which haue cast off their children for poore marriages, but neuer any for the wealthie, were they neuer so wicked: therefore whosoever for this cause, denieth right to his childe, shall be more faulty for their vngodly disposition, then the children for their vnaduised mariage. Now in these dayes it is a wonder to see how the mindes of men and women can loue for wealth, that euen as an harlot humbleth her selfe for money to him, whom otherwise she would not looke vpon; so men and women will marrie themselves for wealth, where, if there were pouertie, they would thinke them vnworthy to be their seruants. I maruell, if the Heathen law were now in force, that no man should giue any thing to their daughters mariage, in what time of their dayes would these men marrie? truly I thinke they would neuer marrie, except it were to make drudges of their wiues. But these are not of *Bez* his mind, for he marrieth a stranger, who had but little wealth, because the Lord so commanded to take his kinsmans wife; although hee might haue refused, yet hee was contented for this cause, to buy her, as he saith in this verse: to teach vs, that if God bid vs to marry, that is, if we find in our own consciences that we cannot liue otherwise, then rather aduenture thy wealth, then the displeasure of God. But some will say, is it not lawfull to desire and to sue for wealthie mariages? yea verily with this affection, that thou like thy choice, as well if there were little, as now there is much. And therefore thou must euermore remember these cautions, both in the chusing and vsing of a wealthie mariage. First, that thou desire it, to the intent thou mayest be more able to do good to thy brethren

thren that want, for it is a more blessed thing to giue, then to receiue. Secondly, that thou mayest the more freely giue thy selfe priuately, and publikely, to the seruice of God; for wee know that pouerty taketh our greatest time to labour for wife and family, but the wealthy needlesse labour, and may apply the more time to the seruice of God: therefore was it that *Paul* said, the married care for the things of this life to please their wiues: shewing, that it is one misery vpon the poore, when they are married, that they are troubled about worldly and necessary prouision, but if these things bee supplied by a good marriage, thou mayest praise God with the greater diligence.

1. Cor. 7. 34

23 But who are they which haue desired or obtained a wealthy marriage for either of these causes? if the poore should go in collection for reliefe of them, which for this occasion haue richly ioyned themselues, what should they gather, or how farre should they goe? to how many persons might they come, before they get a shilling? Truly for this cause they desire them, some, that they might lauish out the more in riotous expences, with the rich man in the Gospell, to feed in pleasure, to be clothed in silke, to maintaine dogs, hounds, hawkes, horses, and retinues of idle men, but neuer the Church of God fareth the better for them. Againe, by their wealth, they haue idlenesse and time to wander abroad, heere to feast and make merry, there to play and disport themselues in bodily exercises, and worldly vanities, but neuer one houre the more is spent in the seruice of God, but much the lesse, for the Diuels sweet and pleasant baits draw away their minds from the consideration of their owne miseries. Againe, they are many times a thousand fold more clogged with the cares of their wealth, then the poorest soule to prouide bread for his family by his bodily labour. Lastly, their desire is to leaue great possessions to their posteritie, that the honor of their houses may be encreased, and the name of their memory might be euerlastingly recorded, so that neither the glory of God, the promoting

moting of the Gospell, the relieuing of the faithfull, or the succouring of Iesus Christ himselfe, is any part of the thought of these couetous wretches, but as they desire the inheritances of the Lord, to be their portion in this present life, so they haue them for the canker of their soules, the rust to consume them, the care to torment them, the feare to forsake them, the loue to enioy them, the trauell to encrease them, and the reckoning for abusing them, to their endlesse confusion. Therefore, except the Lord do build the house, their labour is but in vaine, that build it, except the Lord make the mariage, the riches of *Salomon* cannot continue them, for better is a little that the religious hath, then the great possessions of the vngodly.

*Psal. 37. 16.*

*Gen. 14. 35*

*Rebecca.*

*Gen. 30.*

*32. 33.*

24 Lastly, he that marieth for obedience vnto God, must haue this care to prouide before hand things honest and lawfull for the present maintenance of wife and family. Therefore when *Abrahams* seruants came to the Citie of *Nachor*, among others, which he told vnto *Laban*, and the mother of *Ribkah*, he shewed them what cattell, and flockes, seruants and maidens, his master had, which all should be *Isaaks*, thereby signifying, that all necessary prouision for their maintenance, was already procured, and there wanted nothing, but a wife for *Isaak*. So *Jacob* after his fourteene yeares seruice with *Laban*, couenanteth to haue the profit of the flockes which should be sported, and this was when he knew he was to depart from his father in law, and therefore was bound to prouide for himselfe. Now this prouision is not to meant, as though euery one were bound to get all things before hand, which are needful to mariage, but it is required, that euery one should procure somewhat according to their degree, and the maintenance of their calling. This point is clearer then the Sunne, and it serueth to the reproofing of them, which runne headlong to marrie one day, but fall into woefull beggery the next, neither houses to dwell in, labour to worke on, meate to sustaine them, money to procure them, friends to relieue them, or credit

credit to helpe them, onely wiues and husbands they must needs haue, not caring what shal become of them afterward: And truly, if the hurt did onely redound to their owne hinderance, their pittie vvas the lesse: but woefull it is to tell, how their miserable posteritie are thereby (euen through their parents rashnesse) brought to euerlasting pouertie, and such as is most lamentable, for their mindes are not instructed, they haue no knowledge of the true God, neither can they pray to their comfort, or hope for any saluation. If it were but the labour and pouertie of the bodie, it were much to be desired, and nothing to be feared; but being the endangering of both bodie and soule, how much is it to be disliked; that any for their owne lustes should leaue their wretched posteritie to the power of the Diuell. Therefore, beloued, counsell your acquaintance to be carefull for their children, as well as themselves, first to trie, and then to trust, first to prepare somewhat, that if sicknesse come, or charges come, or age ouertake thee, yet then thou mayest comfort thy selfe with thy owne gotten goods, and rather be helpfull, then chargeable to any.

25 Fourthly, by this that Boaz saith, he taketh Ruth to wife, for to stirre vp the name of the dead, and that the name of the dead bee no more forgotten among his brethren in the gate of his place: We note, that their marriages must be taken in hand also to this end, for the multiplying of the Church of God: vvee haue already shewed how one cause of this brothers marriage was for that vse and purpose, and in this place not vnecessary to confirme. For the Law of this marriage was speciall onely for God his people, and therefore for the augmenting of the number of the Lords flocke. And as this was among the Iewes, that euery family might haue some temporall inheritours, euen so is it among the Gentiles, that if it bee possible, euery one should bring one infant or other, to be an inheritour of the Lords kingdome. By the which parents are taught to be more carefull for the



education and instruction of their children, then for their procreation and birth, for they are made the fathers and mothers of Christ in his members, therefore they must not leaue him to *Herod*, that is, they must not giue their children to the power of Satan, by their negligence and vwant of teaching: they are accursed that lay stumbling-blockes before the blinde, and shall not they also that leade them into the Sea, where is nothing but drowning? euen so if godlesse parents doe leade their children, and innocent babes, into damnable ignorance, vwho shall answere for their soules? shall not the authors of this destruction? Had not parents neede then to looke to themselves, for if they haue as much gold as *Salomon* had, and as great inheritances as *Caleb* had, and as much possession of cattell as *Iob* had, yet if they bee not able to bring vp their children in the feare of God, it vvere better for parents and children they had neuer beene borne, then miserable to liue in vwealth, and bee euery houre in danger of damnation. But how then, will you say, must we be carefull for the instruction of our children? I answere, you must be carefull for these two things: first, that you teach them that vvhich is good: secondly, that you giue no euill example vnto them.

Concerning the first, for the teaching of them the truth, you must first teach them the matter of their faith, and secondly, how to pray. The matter of their faith is contained in the twelue Articles, commonly called the Creed or Beleefe, vvhich euery father and mother is bound to teach their children, with the pure vnderstanding thereof, and as they bee able to shew them the proofes thereof, out of the Word of God, I meane, as the children bee able to receiue it. Herein they must instruct them of the miserable estate of mankinde after their fall, by the vse and vnderstanding of the Morall Law, contained in the two Tables of the ten Commandements, with the proofes thereof out of the Scripture, and the deliuerance

liuerance by the death and blood-sheading of Iesus Christ, the eternall and onely begotten Sonne of God.

26 Againe, you must teach them to pray according as the Lord hath taught vs in that forme which wee call the Lord Prayer, with the vnderstanding thereof, out of the Word of God, for except you teach them what they pray for by the vnderstanding of it, you were as good to teach them in Greeke or Latine; as in English. For there are many thousands in England that call God Father in their prayers, but I know not that there be any which know the meaning of the Word. I my selfe haue reasoned with many both yong and old, and with men of good calling in the world, about that one word, which is the easiest and playnest in all the word of God, but some few excepted, which haue laboured for knowledge in the hearing of Sermons: I neuer met with man, woman, nor childe; that could giue mee any reasonable answer vnto this question beside this, that God made them, and therefore is their Father, which euery Iew, and almost euery Pagan knoweth as well as they: Therefore as our righteousnesse must exceed the righteousnesse of the Scribes and Pharisees, Iewes and Gentiles, so must our knowledge also, for by our knowledge of Christ we are iustified to be his members. And although we repeate the Lords Prayer a thousand times euery day, and vnderstand it not, we do but babble before the Lord, taking his name in vaine, vsing it in our lippes, when our hearts haue no vnderstanding, and therefore our prayers are without fruit.

27 Lastly, if you your selues doe not walke before them without reproofe, in pure and sanctified conuersations, whatsoever you teach them, you presently treade our againe, for simple people and yong children liue by examples, and not by precept: if you teach them to worship God, you must also before their faces worship the same, that they may practise by your example. If you bid them that they sweare not, you

Mat. 6. 9.

Ist. 53. 17.

Gen.31,52

your selfe must be carefull not to sweare, or else they will not beleue you: for as the people looke vpon the life of their Pastour, so the yong children behold the steppes of their Parents. And wee see in brute beasts that examples are much more effectuall then precepts, they cannot speake; yet how doe they traine vp their yong ones? It is reported of the Hartes of Scythia, that they teach their yong ones to leape from banke to banke, from rocke to rocke, from one turfe to another by their owne example, leaping before them, vvhich otherwise they would neuer practise, by vvhich meanes, vvhhen they are hunted, no beast can euer take them. Euen so, if you goe before your children in example while they are yong, Satan the hunter and roaring Lion, shall neuer haue them for his prey. When they learne to speake, they take the words from our owne mouthes: euen so vvhhen they learne to worship, feare, loue, honor, and pray vnto the Lord, let them take you for their examples, as *Iacob* did *Abraham* and *Isaak*. Now let vs giue praise to God.

## The thirteenth Lecture.

*Ruth*, Chap.4. verse, 11.12.

- 11 And all the people that were in the gate, and the Elders said, wee are witnesses: the Lord make the wife that commeth into thy house, like *Rahel* and *Leah*, which twaine did build the house of *Israel*, & that thou mayest doe worthily in *Epbratab*, and bee famous in *Bethlehem*, &c.

12 And

12

*And that thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Thamar bare vnto Iudah, of the seed which the Lord shall giue thee of this yong woman.*



So we haue hitherto heard of *Boaz* and his kinsman, the one in resigning, and the other in receiuing his right, in the place of iudgement, and the presence of the Elders and people. So now the holy Ghost proceedeth to declare vnto vs, the behauiour of this latter sort at this mariage of *Boaz*: which is their answere vnto that speech of *Boaz*: when he calleth them to witnesse the bargaine.

The words doe easily diuide themselues into two parts, the first is their confessions, to bee vvitnesses of the contract, in these words: *Then spake all the people and Elders, wee are witnesses.* The second part is the prayer they make for *Boaz* and *Ruth*: in the next words consisting of two members, the first is the fruitfulnessse of *Ruth*, when they pray she may be like *Rabel* and *Leah*: that hee may bee wealthie in *Ephratah*, and famous in *Bethlehem*: The second member of this second part is for the blessing of God vpon the posteritie of these two new married persons: In the twelfth verse, that their house might be like the house of *Pharez* the sonne of *Iudah*, which till that time, had the chiefest dignitie in the Tribe of *Iudah*, and so continued till the Scepter was taken from *Iudah*, and the Law-giuer from betweene his feete, which was almost fiftene hundred yeares, vntill the raigne of the Idumean *Herod*. Of these parts, let vs briefly speake in order, by the assistance of God his heauenly Spirit, and the permission of the time.

2 *And all the people*] These words, as we shewed you, are the first part, vvherein the Rulers and people acknowledge their testimony with one content, freely yeelding vnto the request of *Boaz*, and willingly reioicing at that so strange a matter, vvhhen one of

the chiefe of their Elders, for loue of the law of God, would to his owne discommoditie, marrie with a stranger, and so base a woman, looking neither on birth nor wealth, but on the hidden man of the heart, making vertue his choice, and religion his portion. Out of which we note.

First, that it is the duerie of the godly, willingly in any good matter to giue their testimonie for their brethren: for men in this latter age are growen so fearefull, that they will hardly testifie the truth, for dread of some euill that might ensue thereby: these persons are not of the minde of these godly Iewes, both Elders and others in this place, vvhich of their owne accord, giue witnesse vnto *Boaz* for the purchase of his land, and the marriage of his wife: so wee reade the people witnessed with *Samuel*, when *Saul* was chosen King: yea against their owne selues; because they had refused him to be their King, and chose a King to raigne ouer them, after the manner of the Heathen. This is the more vvorthis to bee considered in this place, because this people did not after any scoffing manner, but soberly and in the feare of God (as appeareth by their prayer) vvitnessed this contract vnto *Boaz*: the vvorld in these dayes, if the like thing should fall out, that an old man in the presence of so great a Congregation, should take to his vvife so yong a vvoman, vvould rather mocke, scorne and disdain it, then vvith such reuerent modestie pray for it: For herein the vvorld sheweth it selfe, vvhich is vvont to condemne that in other, which in themselves they highly commend, and to looke but vpon the outward appearance, discerning and iudging but with bodily eyes and carnall minds, yet here these Iewes Bethlemites, shall speake for the godly, not deriding strange actions, not denying their voyces to a lawfull condition, not iudging but with a spirituall eye, piercing through the barke of humane body, into the soule of a godly old man: and this is the more commendable, because the Magistrates and Elders themselves ioine them

them to the people in so godly proceeding, by vvhose example, it is no doubt, the wauering multitude was much encouraged.

3 And this teacheth vs how excellent is the profession and forwardnes of men in authoritie, vpon whom the eyes of the Common-wealth dependeth: they are neuer alone, but as all beasts and creatures followed *Noah* into his Arke, because hee went before, so all fortes will follow their disposition, be it good or euill: Wee reade of the wicked Iudges of Iezrael, vvhich condemned innocent *Naboth*, had also wicked witnesses against him, for such as *Ahab* and *Iezabel* were, such vvere the Iudges, and as the Iudges vvere, the same vvere the people: if they bee godly, the lights of their liues vwill shine vnto others, if they bee prophane, their darkenesse is like the darkenesse of Egypt, vvhich spread it selfe ouer all the Land. Oh how comfortable is your presence at our godly assemblies to the despised members of Christ: if you come, many come: if you abide at home, many follow your steppes, the souldiers will follow the Captaines, into the hottest skirmishes, but without them, it is a grieve to goe into the easiest battels: so right Worshipfull, if you continue your diligence in hearing the Gospell, wee your vnderlings and seruants vwill follow you to the farthest; but if you fall away, wee are discouraged also: one vvord of your mouthes in the commendation of goodnesse, is like golden apples in dishes of siluer, but one steppe of your trauell to the mountaine of Sion in the company of the faithfull, is like the company of *Jonathan* and his armour-bearer, to driue a vvhole armie of vngodly Philistims from the tents of Gods Saints: If *Gedeon* bee once named, vvhat are the company of Madianites: if the Magistrate or Gentle-man frequent the exercises of Religion, all the mouthes of the swinish Atheists, which treade the pearles of the Gospell vnder their teete, are stopped. Look vpon the Eunuch to *Queene Candaces*, vvhich came euery yeare many hundred miles to worship at

1. King. 21.  
12. 13.

1. Sam. 14.  
16.  
Iudg. 7. 20.

Act. 8. 27.  
Luke 14.



Act. II.

Act. 17. 4.

Ierusalem: hee was a noble man, yet it vvas no discredit to his honour to bee diligent in God his seruice. Looke vpon that noble *Theophilus*, to vvhom *Luke* dedicateth his bookes, vvhon all the vvorlde persecuted Christ, yet hee suffered his name to bee formost in the Gospell, that none should be discouraged at the profession of Christ, when such a noble man vvould suffer his name to goe publikely in the booke. Looke vpon the noble women of Thessalonica, which in greatest danger ioyned themselues to the profession of the Gospell. Looke vpon that excellent Ladie, to vvhom *Iohn* vvriteth in his second Epistle, and her sister also, whose children fauoured and confessed the Gospell, as well as their parents: the day would not suffice to follow all that I might, these went before in the world, and before in the Lord, that is, they were noted in wealth, but notable in Religion, they were singular in authoritie, but excellent in Christianitie, the memory of their wealth is lost, but the record of their faith remaineth registred in God his Booke for euer. These men and women were worthy of their places, such as could rule their riches by the Word, feed their seruants with the Gospell, and cloath their soules with Iesus Christ.

Act. 2. 46.

4 Secondly, by this we note, that seeing they all witnessed, & they all praied for *soaz*: the duty of them that are gathered together in any godly assembly, which is to ioine themselues in the same holy exercises: if they heare, the other must heare, if they pray, the other must pray, if they sing, the other must also sing: for this is the fellowship of the Saints, or else nothing is: When wee reade the Church of God continued together in breaking bread; it is also said they continued in praier, as if the holy Ghost had said, euen as euery one did eat bread, so euery one did pray to the Lord: as it auaieth not a hungry man to see another eat, and he haue none, but rather encrease his desire: so if you be euery day and houre where praiers are made, & your selus taste not of them, it doth but encrease your damnatio: many hands make

make a great labour to bee lightly dispatched, and many mens praiers doe pull downe the mercies of God vpon vs. This I thinke is very needfull for our dayes, wherein this dulnesse is growne so grosse; that among a Church full of hearers, you shall haue very few which are not faultie in this Doctrine: for it is a world to see how many haue their bodies at the Sermons, but their soules and affections are wandering in a thousand matters: these pray not when wee pray, heare not when wee preach, neither sing when wee sing, what profit haue these persons by our prayers, or preaching: surely, they are Idols, they haue tongues but speake not; eares, but heare not; eies, but they see not. And this is most lamentable, to see many vpon whom the Lord hath bestowed this gift of reading or learning, to come hand ouer head to Churches, without either booke or minde of profit to themselues or other: Thus they burie the graces of God in them, they quench the fire of the holy Spirit, they loose the costs of their Parents, which they bestowed to bring them to learning, they disdain to sing with the faithfull, they abhorre the labours of their youth, and mock the Lord with their presence: Looke vpon it my Brethren, for if the Lord haue giuen any of you learning, that you are able to reade his word, then hee hath planted you to beare fruit in his owne Orchard, but if you vse not this gift, then you are fruitlesse Trees, and the Lord will cut you downe and cast you into vnquenchable fire, if you say you haue no bookes, I answere, the fault lieth in our selues, for if you bee poore, aske the godly and your want shall be supplied: if you be wealthy, saue some of your idle expences to spend vpon such a holy businesse. If you say you forget your bookes beninde you, I answere; it is a signe you care but little for your journeyes end, for if you had that reuerence, to come prepared to the exercises of the faithfull, which you ought to haue, you could not forget your Bibles, nay, you should rather forget your apparrell then your

I. Cor. 14.  
16. 17.

your bookes, if you considered as it becommeth you. But some say, they vnderstand well enough, though they say not *Amen* to our prayers, and though they sing not to the Lord with vs, but *Paul* saith to such, that they do no good to their Brethren, because they edifie them not, and that it is better in the Church to speake five wordes to instruct others, then ten thousand for his owne benefit: for in the Church we are assembled for our Brethren, not for our selues only, and whosoever prayeth not with his Brethren in the Church or Congregation, doth breake the fellowship of the faithfull, and standeth for a cypher among the Saints: Therefore if you haue any care of your dutie to the Lord, of the loue of the faithfull, of obedience to your Parents; of increasing your talent of learning, or the saluation of your owne soules, both Magistrate and Subiect, Elders and People, Rich and Poore, Old and Yong, Men and Women, fulfill the expectation of the godly, pray when we pray, sing with vs when we sing, heare vs when we Preach: for with such Sacrifice is the Lord pleased.

§ *The Lord make.* Now wee haue made an end of the first part, let vs goe to the second, which is the prayer of these People and Elders, the first member whereof is contained in these words, wherein they pray for the fruitfulness of *Ruth*, alleaging an example to testifie the loue they beare to *Boaz*, that they desire his Wife to be as fruitfull as either *Leah*, or *Rahel*, who builded the house of Israel, so that they would haue him the Father of much people, in so much as his name both of wealth and children, might aduance the dignitie of *Bethlehem Ephrathah*.

First, therefore hence wee note the dutie of all the godly, which is to pray for the welfare one of another, but especially in marriage, for the praers of the faithfull are as needfull for the married as skilfull mariners, in the boate of passengers. Therefore we reade of few godly marriages in the Scripture, but they were celebrated with prayer, when *Rebecca* was married to *Isaac*, her Mother, Brother, and Friends, praied that shee might

Gen. 24. 60.

might grow vp into thousand thousands, and her seede to possesse their enemies gate : and in this place these friends of *Boaz* pray the like for *Ruth*, for what make the peoples presence, the multitude of lookers, the number of acquaintance, at the time of celebrating mariages, except it be to pray for the parties, we haue shewed you the last Sabbath, that for the ignorance of the people which could not pray, came the Minister to haue a hand in it, for supplying their want : and how lamentable is it to see in many places, and most persons that are married, where their companie are none but godlesse Ruffians, ignorant Atheists, prophane Swearers, and notable Blasphemers, to bee present at their unhappie weddings, what praier can these powre forth, for their new married friends ? can the Cockatrice breathe forth any thing but poison, or the Spider spinne any sounder cloath then her webbe ? no more can these persons, but curse them with their prayers, not blesse them with their cursings : is it not a world to see how many against their marriages compasse the countrie, some to provide delicate diuersities of meats, to feede both the belly and the eye, others to inuite their friends, which come rustling into the Churches, in silkes, veluets, fattens, and soft apparrell, and some to deck vp themselues in braue cloathing, against their marriage day, but neuer one thought for the faithfull praier of the godly, that their prosperous life may bee blessed in wedlock, this they ought to be most carefull for, and yet not to leaue the other vndone, but godly praier is better then great portions, and it is better to haue poore Christ at our weddings, then a thousand thousands of these glistering Gallantes. Truly, in these daies how doe men and women provide for mirth, not for modestie, that their day of marriage may be ioyfull with worldly disports, not godly with Christian exercises : they buy and hire Musitions, to passe the time in pleasant dancing, but neuer intreat or speake one word to the godly, to bestow their hearty praier vpon them. Let therefore beloued, this bee our direction, that as

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we marrie for the Lord, not for the world, so we studie for praier, and not for pleasure.

6 Secondly, by this wee gather that the greatest blessing in mariage is the bearing of children, the blessing vpon the Vine is to bring many grapes, the blessing vpon the earth is to bee fruitfull in bringing and springing much Corne and pastures, the blessing on the Sea, is the multiplying of the Fish, and the blessing of mariage is many children: Therefore in this place they pray that *Ruth* might be like *Rabel* and *Leah*, which builded all Israell, that is, they were the Mothers of a great Nation, they multiplyed in their Posteritie to a number like the Starres of heauen. For this cause the first blessing vpon mankind after the flood, was that they should increase and fill the earth, for this cause the Fathers desired children so much, and the ouerloue of many children, encreased the multitude of their Wiues: and for this cause the Apostle saith, that women through bearing of children shall bee saved, if they continue in faith, and loue, and holinesse with modestie. For all other blessings may bee had without marriage, wealth and riches, comfort and friends, honour and pleasure, quietnesse and rest, may bee found in the liues of vnmarried persons, only children must come of a grafted stock, which is a holy and sanctified mariage, or wedlock. When *Abraham* wanted a Sonne, hee prayed for one: when *Rebecca* was barren, *Isaac* prayed for her, and shee conceived: When *Manoah* wanted children, hee prayed, and the Lord gaue him *Sampson*: when *Annas* was barren, shee prayed and obtayned *Samuel*: and when *Zacharie* and *Elizabeth* had no issue, by praier they obtayned *Iohn Baptist*. So they accompted of their mariage without children, as a faire and pleasant Garden without fruits, and as the one doth fructifie by seasonable showers, so the other doth multiply by faithfull supplications, so Therefore here this people of God pray for *Boaz* and *Ruth*, that many pleasant twigs may spring out of their fruitfull bodies, By the which we see the readie remedie for bar-

Gen. 9. 1.

1. Tim. 2. 15

barrenesse, which are godly & zealous praier, powred forth into the eares of the Almighty, that he would remove his hand from punishing, and withdraw the curse of barrenesse from penitent sinners. But in our praier we must alway take heed that we appoint not the Lord what he shall giue vs, either Sonnes or Daughters, but rest vpon the will of God to receiue either of both.

7 And indeede be it that children are the greatest blessing of marriage, yet all things considered, it is much happier to bee barren, for our miserable dayes, and sinfull liues call for a scourge, and once more the saying of Christ shall bee fulfilled, that there shall be woe to them that are with child, and that giue suck in those dayes, yea vndoubtedly our posteritie will count them happy that are vnborne, and themselues shall with *Iob* and *Ieremie* they had neuer scene the Sunne. Oh who are they that haue any desire to haue many children? looke vpon the world, it falleth to Atheisme: looke vpon the Church, it declineth to error: looke vpon the Gospell, it is persecuted by the Demill, and view euery degree, if corruption groweth not vpon them: truly, truly, as *Esaie* said, the daies of mourning for my Father will shortly come, so may all the faithfull say, the day of mourning for the Gospell and knowledge will one day come, and the Lord knoweth how soone: Therefore if you would leaue your children to be Atheists, your issue to be Heretikes, your Posteritie to be afflicted, and all your off-spring to be corrupted, and miserably punished in this life, or eternally plagued in the life to come, then desire little children. Be it, you can prouide lands to maintaine them, teachers to instruct them, learning to defend them, honor to aduance them, friends to assist them, and Castles of securitie to keep them from the hurt of the world: yet alas, alas, into how many thousand aduersities may their soules descend, I speake not this to discourage any from desiring children, but I admonish from the Lord that you bee wise in your petitions, and thinke as well of your Infants miserie, as your owne suffering: now you desire

Mat. 24.

Gen. 27. 43



desire ease without paines, but they in all manner of afflictions may send vp cries to the heauens and not be heard. Oh that all degrees both married and vnmarried, would haue pittie on their posteritie, before they be borne, then should fewer bee Vagabonds then now are, and more be provided for then now can be, then should men and women for their childrens sake amend their loose and desperate behauiour not fit for Pagans, much lesse for Christians, least the children should bee plagued for the Fathers fault: Assuredly beloued, the Lord hath spoken it, that if your children proue wicked, they shall suffer and beare the sinnes of all their Ancestors, yea though they be dead many hundred yeares agoe.

8 Thirdly, by this praier of these Elders and People, wee note, that for the helping of our weakenesse in praier, and relieuing of our wants, wee may set before vs the goodnesse of God vnto others. In this place they pray that *Ruth* may bee as fruitfull as *Rabel* and *Leah*, which were the Wiues of *Isaiah*, who bare him eight Sonnes and one Daughter, expresseing their heartie praier for *Boaz* & *Ruth*, by the example of these twaine. The like wee may reade of the Apostles, when they prayed after their deliuerance from the Rulers and Elders, they alleage *Dauid* for their helpe, as he speaketh in the second Psalm. For wee many times know not what to aske as we ought, but the spirit which wrought these gifts in the Fathers, helpeth our infirmities by the examples of the ancient godly, that wee should aske the same graces which they enioyed, to leade the same liues which they liued, and obayne the same crowne, wherewith they are all rewarded. Yet we must alwaies remember the rule of the Apostle, that this is our assurance, if wee craue any thing according to his will, we receiue it: that is, we must not desire the least thing in worldly affaires, but vnder this condition; If it be thy will, O God, because the Lord is not bound to giue vs any thing, no more then we are to giue euery begger that asketh an almes of vs, but if we absolutely craue

AB. 4. 25.

1. Iob. 5. 54.

crave without this exception, wee breake the law of praier, and bring the Maiestie of God into bondage by our Petitions.

9 This teacheth vs this profitable lesson, that before we pray, we should learne and consider our wants by the word of God, that wee aske not at the hands of the Almighty, any thing beside that which is godly, honest, and lawfull. for many, I am perswaded, doe soddainly and vnadvisedly start vp into the presence of the Lord, with rash and vngodly desires, because they want the knowledge of the word of God, and the due consideration of those things which they want. Of this sort are all the praiers of the Papists, for they neither vnderstand their prayers in a strange tongue, nor yet will examine them by the word of God: Vnto these I adde the prayers and wishes of the ignorant multitude, which are as farre from the true praiers of the faithful, as the Moone is from the earth: For as it is impossible for a man to goe without his legs, or to see without his eyes, so is it impossible for these to pray without the knowledge of the Gospell: For in our prayers we must speake to the Lord in his owne tongue, as he speaketh in his word, but what can these persons bring out of the treasures of the holy Scriptures? scant one sentence in the whole Gospell rightly vnderstood, how then can they bring the matter of their whole prayers, if they want but one thing that will suffice? but who is liuing which standeth not in neede of many thousand mercies? But I know their old excuse, for they say they pray according to the Scripture, when they repeat the Lords prayer, which is set downe in the Scripture: to whom I answere, they doe well if they vnderstand it, but where doe they finde those wishes to grow rich, those curses vpon them with whom they are angrie, whether it be man or beast, and tell me the vnderstanding of one Petition in the Lords praier. Therefore beloued, pray in spirit, but pray in vnderstanding also, vie the Scripture for the rule of your supplication, for as no man can say that Iesus is the Lord, but only by the

Mat. 6. 9.

the spirit of God, so none can pray rightly, but by the knowledge of the Gospell: If you once entertaine this knowledge of God his word, then you will doe with it as a cunning workman in his Trade: he will euer take delight in his worke and occupation, euen so if you had this feeling, you would delight in praier, which now is a hell vnto many, then your hearts both priuately would be as studious in meditating goodnesse, as euer they were desirous of worldly pleasure, and would publicly breathe after it, as the Hart in his chase doth after the Well-springs. But oh, dearely beloued, this condemneth men of hatred of God, of the pride of themselves, of ignorance in the truth, of coldnesse in Religion, of trusting in the world, mispending of time, louing of pleasure, and lack of deuotion, that they are as hardly drawne to praier, according to the common Prouerbe, as a Hare taken with a Tabret. Thinke you that these persons, which absent themselves from public petitions and priuate praiers, haue any loue of God in them: nay, are not those condemned which are drawne to them against their wil, and where shall these cursed Companions appeare, which forsake Sermons, goe out of Churches, lie idly at home, and are disporting themselves in brauerie abroad, when the time of praier calleth for their presence at home or in the Church? doe they not separate themselves from the faithfull in this life? and therefore they shall be miserably damned with the Diuell and his Angells, and euerlastingly excluded from Christ and his Saints.

10 Fourthly, by this praier of these Elders wee obserue, that we must especially pray for the multiplying and augmenting of the faithfull, for they pray that *Ruth* may be like, not to the Daughters of *Lot*, of whom came the cursed *Moabites* and *Ammonites*: nor yet to *Rebecca*, of whom came the vngodly *Edonites*: nor yet to *Keturah*, from whom came the godlesse *Madianites* and *Arabians*: but to *Rabel* and *Leah*, which builded the house of *Israel*, that is, which increased the Lords people, which multiplied the Heires of the promised Land, and augmented

mented the number of the faithfull. This our Sauour commanded to be done, next to the glorifying of God: first wee say, Hallowed bee thy name, and then, Thy Kingdome come, which is, first that the Spirit might raigne in our hearts, and then that more Saints may bee added to the Church: For wee must pray for the multiplying of the Friends, and not for the Enemies of Christ. For this cause *Paul* compareth marriage to the coniunction betweene Christ and his Church: for as the one ingendreth many Saints, so the other must beget many faithfull members: and truly as one Pearle is worth ten thousand Peebles, so one good Child is better to the Parents, then many thousand of euill. The vse of this Doctrine is, that we should not be like the Iewes, desirous of many children, because our Families should grow great, but like the Doves, which bring forth few, which might be the children of innocence: the Elephant being the greatest, and yet the meekest beast, conceiueth but once in all her time, whereas the lesser and more hurtfull Creatures increase many, yet it is better for the first to haue but one, which are good and hurtlesse, then for the latter to haue many, which are euill and harmefull: euen so beloued, it is good to increase Doves and not Serpents, Elephants, and not Tigers, and better is one *Isaac* the Sonne of promise, then a thousand *Ismaels*, the children of bondage: Wee know the most precious hearbs bring the least fruits, and that is not the best, which doth most of all multiply, so the godly like good Trees, must rather desire one or two children like themselves, and to bring forth and grow in issue sparingly, by little and little, then sodainely to swell vp like the waues of the Sea. Wee reade that *Ismael* had twelue Sonnes, all Princes, but *Isack* his Brother had only twaine, *Jacob* and *Esa*, and them he obtayned by praier, so hardly the godly are borne and conceiued, when with the vicked they come as thicke as the haile-stones in Egypt, for the confusion of the fruit of the Land. Therefore as the seede is cast in vaine

*Eph. 5. 24.*  
25.

*Gen. 25. 16*  
21.

vpon the Land, which the Fowles do presently deuour, so those children had been better they had neuer been borne, whom darkenesse blindeth, ignorance possesseth, malice ruleth, vngodlinesse leadeth, and Satan tormenteth: for the fewest number are the godliest posteritie, in whom light shineth, knowledge dwelleth, meekenesse reigneth, godlinesse guideth, and Christ eternally blesseth.

II Fifthly, by the praier of these people wee note, the second blessing of a godly marriage, which is to gather by lawfull meanes much wealth: for that which in the English is, *doe worthily in Ephrathah*; in the Hebrew is, *gather wealth in Ephrathah*: For it is more generall in the English, then in the originall, for to gather wealth by honest meanes, is to doe worthily, because it is the blessing of God: Therefore we will take the surest and the safest interpretation, by the which this collection is confirmed, and their meaning is, that *Boaz* which in his marriage respected not riches, should by his godly choise enjoy a vertuous wife, to bring vp faithfull children, and increase his substance by the blessing of God, that he might aduance the honour of their Countrey and Citie. Neither is this vnkowne that after children, the growing in wealth is the next blessing of the Lord, as *Abrahams* Seruant telleth *Laban*, the Lord hath blessed my Master exceedingly, and made him very great, for he hath giuen him flocks and Heard, Siluer and Gold, Seruants and Maidens, Cammels and Asses, all this did the Lord blesse *Abraham* with after his marriage with *Sara*: Againe, the holy Ghost describing *Iob*, after his children, which were seuen Sonnes and three Daughters, hee reckoneth his wealth, and saith: His possession was seuen thousand Cattell, three thousand Cammels, five hundred yoke of Oxen, and five hundred three Asses, with a great household. For wealth in marriage, is the best Seruant that can be entertained, I might speake of many more, but few perswasions will suffice in this point, because wealth was wont to bee the Maide, and godlinesse the

Gen. 24. 35

Iob 1. 3.

the Mistris: but now riches is become the Mistris, and Religion the Maide: For wealth, men rise early and goe late to bedde, labour diligently, and fare hardly, trauaile earnestly, and sweat painefully, and I can finde no fault but with too much following this wealthie trade: For first of all, I must complaine with *Salomon*, that there is but one and not a second, who hath neither Brother nor Sonne, yet there is no end of his labour, neither is his eye satisfied with riches, for this old canker infecteth euery age, whereby it is a pleasure to certaine couetous wretches, to toile their bodies with vntimely labours, to clogge their mindes with golden cares, and to wearie their senses in numbring their wealth: and what is the end heresof? surely this, the gatherer is like an Asse which carrieth the treasure but cannot vse it, being laid on his back it must bee taken off againe: the Heires like the Drones spend all, but gather none, for as they sweat not for it, as it was in getting, so they spare not as long as it lasteth, lauishng out that in riotous companie, which was gathered in couetous encroching. Others, that they may thrue, count all things lawfull: for they say God hath giuen the earth to the children of men, therefore they spend the Sabbaths in buying and selling, in bargaining and labouring: they get by right and wrong, forgerie and deceit, play and worke, neither lands nor cattels come amide to them, so they may haue them: But wee must alway remember, that we neither go to the right hand nor to the Left, that is, if thou haue many children, thou must vse no vnlawfull meanes to keepe them: if thou haue none, thou must not hoarde vp thy wealth, as if thou hadst some, but remember the day of aduersitie, and deale somewhat for thy present needs, and not altogether for thy owne commoditie.

12 But you will say, shew vs some brieue rules, by which wee may practise the truth: by your fauourable Audience I will giue you these three rules: the first is in getting, the second in keeping, and the third in departing from it.

*Eccles. 4. 7.*

*Eccles. 6. 2.*



Gen. 30. 33.

Deut. 8. 18.

1. Tim. 6. 9.

10.

1. Tim. 6.

6. 7. 8.

Concerning the first, which is getting of wealth, first our only care must bee for the blessing of God to encrease vs: wee haue an excellent example in *Iacob*, hauing nothing in the world beside his Wiues and Children, yet would receiue no wages of *Laban*, but promised his seruice for the spotted Lambs, choosing rather to depend vpon the blessing of God, then the policie of his owne wit, to testifie his vprightnesse in the presence of *Laban*, and to teach vs all, that thriving commeth more by the fauour of the Lord, then the wisdom of the world. For *Laban* thought hee had made a good bargain for himselfe, which indeed proved to his great hinderance, euen so when men thinke they haue compassed the world to increase their profit, suddenly the Lord sendeth a crosse to disappoint their purpose, that they might know that to bee true which *Moses* saith, that it is the Lord which giueth power to get wealth: against this those offend which encrease their wealth, and liue vpon vsurie, for they depend not vpon the blessing of God, but binde their debtors in bands, winne or loose, they will haue both principall and increase. Again, others are so greedily bent vpon their profits, that their only desire is to waxe rich, of whom *Paul* speaketh. They which will waxe rich fall into many temptations, and snares: and many foolish and damnable lusts, which drowne men in cuerlasting destruction: for the loue of mony is the roote of all euill, which while some desired, they erred from the faith, and pierced themselues with many sorowes. This striketh to the earth false measures, naughty wares, breaking of promises, detayning of Heires, raising of rents, oppressing the poore, deceitfull bargaines, and vnlawfull trades; for none of these depend vpon the Lord, but giue their soules to the Deuill, for encreasing their wealth.

13 Secondly, you must know how to vse your wealth according to the word of God: which is thus, according to the counsell of the Apostle, if you haue little, be contented, for godlinesse is great gaine, if a man

man bee contented with that he hath, for wee brought nothing into the world, neither shal we carry any thing out of the world : this is the reason of contentation, but some will say, how much shall wee haue before wee be contented, the Apostle answereth in the next Verse: if wee haue meate and cloathing, wee are therewithall contented. Againe, if they be rich, the same Apostle sheweth how they shal bear their wealth in these words: Charge them that are rich in this world, that they bee not high minded, neither trust in their vncertaine riches, but in the liuing God, which giueth vs all things to enioy abundantly : that they distribute to other, that they be rich in good workes, that they be willing to giue, and easie to be intreated : laying vp for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternall life. Out of the which words we must obserue these things. First, that riches must not make men proude, for they are the gift of God, but our rich men scorne and disdain their poore bretheren of Christ, commanding and oppressing them both by word and deede, in most odious and shamefull manner. Secondly, they must not put any confidence in their wealth, but repose their trust in the liuing God, who gaue it to them, and to whom they shall giue an accompt for vsing and abusing it, for to put trust in their wealth, is to thinke they may doe with it what they please. Thirdly, they must distribute willingly, liberally, and daily, for as they are rich in substance, so they must bee rich in good workes, that is, they must excell other in giuing, as they doe in possession. Fourthly, that those men which doe thus bestow their wealth, haue layed the foundation of their saluation, and lay hold on eternall life. This is the way to keepe wealth after the word of God, and who soeuer doeth otherwise either in marriage or vnmarriage, doth hoarde vp but rust to torment him, the canker to consume him, the care to molest him, and vengeance against the day of vengeance, eternally to condemne him.

1. Tim. 6. 17

18.

19.

Luc. 19. 8.

Prov. 5. 15.  
16. 17.

14 Lastly, in departing from his wealth, first, if he haue wronged any man, hee must follow the example of *Zachens*, restore foure-fold, and hee shall be blamelesse for that. spend liberally vpon his Familie in good sort, after the counsell of *Salomon*, for this pinching of Seruants and Families sauoureth not of God, nor of Religion, nor of Humanitie, the brute Beasts condemne it: but spend nothing in waste, for thou art but Steward of thy goods, now you know a Steward must giue an accompt to his Master. Finally, that which thou reseruest, giue to thy children, as *Abraham*, and all the godly did to their Posteritie: and whosoever followeth this counsell, shall bee guiltlesse for mispending, cleare from euill keeping, free from wrong getting, and acquitted from the dreadfull reckoning which all the world shall make one day to the Lord for abusing his benefits. Now let vs giue thanks to God.

## The fourteenth Lecture.

*Ruth.* Chap. 4. verse, 12. 13. 14. 15.

- 12 And that thy House be like the House of *Pharez* whom *Thamar* bare vnto *Iudah*, of the seede whuch the Lord shall giue thee of this yong Woman.
- 13 So *Boaz* tooke *Ruth*, and shee was his Wife, and when he went in vnto her, the Lord gaue that shee conceived, and bare a Sonne.
- 14 And the Women said vnto *Naomi*, Blessed bee the Lor, which hath not left thee this day without a Kinsman, and his name shall bee continued in *Israel*.

15 And

- 15 And this shall bring thy life againe, and cherish thine old age, for thy Daughter in Law which loveth thee hath borne him, which is better to thee then seven Sonnes.



WE have shewed you the last Sabbath, that this twelfth Verse is a part of the praier of the Elders and People at the marriage of Boaz and Ruth, for in the first part they praied for the fruitfulness of the woman, but in this they commend vnto God the blessing for their Posteritie, and because we then diuided it, we will first of all handle it, and then proceede to that which followeth.

First, therefore out of this second part in their praier, wee gather another dutie of the godly in praying for children, which is, to desire in some measure, the blessings of the world, either riches or honor vpon them: which in this place, these Iewes doe vnfaignedly pray for to the house or posteritie of Boaz, when they say, and that thy house may be like the house of Pharez, who had the birth-right of Iudah, whose posteritie was the noblest of all the Familie, from whom also descended this Boaz, as appeareth by the end of this Chapter; which flourishing estate, as it had continued in the Progenie of Pharez for sixe Generations, so they wish it might follow in his posteritie for many more, neither is this speciall in this place, but also dispersed through all the Scripture, for wee know what promise the Lord made vnto Abraham, that vnto his seed he would giue all the Land of Canaan, as a comfort vnto him, to thinke that his posteritie should be so well provided for, whereby they might not only be continued, but richly aduanced as the Lords of the earth. The like was it that he promised to David, that hee should alway haue a Sonne to sit on his seat, not simply a Sonne, but a Sonne to sit on his seat, as if the Lord had said, thou shalt alway haue the Kingdome in the possession of thy posteritie,

Gen. 12. 4.

2. S. 7. 12.

*Psal. 109. 8*

9. 10.

*Deu. 28. 12.*

and they shall raigne as Kings for euermore. So on the contrarie, it is a curse when the name of houses are put out, their memorie forgotten, their wealth disperfed, their honor abased, and their children like Vagabonds vpon the earth. It was also a speciall promise to the people of the Iewes, that if they obserued the Statutes of the Lord, then should they and their seede bee able to lend to other, but they should not neede to borrow of any.

2 These things considered by the example of those promises of the Lord, and the persons of these Fathers, wee haue an excellent way described for the maintenance of our possession, in the name of our Posteritie: which is this, to commend it by prayer to the tuition of the eternall God, for that which he hath promised, may we pray for, the same way, that maketh barren women to become fruitfull, the increase of the earth to multiply, the heauens to giue their raine, countries to be deliuered from sword, famine, & pestilence, and pulleth downe all the blessings of God vpon vs, is alio the appointed meanes for the continuance of worldly Families. But how long, how long, shall I perswade the world before they beleue it? doe they not spend their dayes in worldly deuises, to compasse the earth by multitudes of purchasings, which are alwayes trauailing abroade in restless iournies, buy many bargaines to augment their substance, vsing all lawful and vnlawfull meanes for to increase their wealth, and enlarge their possessions, that their Posteritie might bee honourable when they are dead, their Children aduanced by monie, not by vertue, maintayned by pride, not by humilitie, raigne like Kings in all manner of pleasure vpon the earth, while the Fathers are tormented in hell for their wrongfull oppressions: thus men pray on the world, as the Eagles on the Altars, and the birds on *Abrahams* Sacrifice, but not to the Lord, as the yong Rauens that call vpon him, who being left of their owne Parents, are fedde by the Lord, that his kindnesse might bee manifested to our Children,

as

as well as to birdes, and that our wel-fare dependeth vpon the blessing of God, not the benefit of Elders, the fauour of our Maker, not the couetousnesse of our fathers. Against these it is that the Prophet crieth, and curseth, because they ioyne house to house, land to land, field to field, inheritance to inheritance, that themselves might raigne alone vpon the earth: this is the care of them, which are suddenly from the dust to the chaire of wealth aduanced, from slauerie to honor, from beggery to riches, that they might (as the Prophet saith) build faire houses, encroch greater compasse of lands, that their names might be famous vpon the earth.

*Esay. 5. 89.*

*Psal. 49. 12*

3 But who is he that maketh any ordinary and daily praier vnto the Lord, that his substance might be by his blessing increased, with his fauour preserued, and to his glory bestowed. Nay, nay, if none had no more wealth then that which they had gotten by prayer, their glorious shewes should in little space grow as bare as the trees in winter, when they haue neither fruit nor leaues to couer them. This I speake not to the discredit of any wealthie persons, but shew them the way to attaine the end of their desire, the continuance of their posteritie in godlines and wealth, which is by prayer. For as Christ prayed for *Peter*, that his faith should not faile him; so parents must pray for their posteritie, that their names may not decay in them. If any thinke when their barnes are enlarged, their corne gathered, they filled, health enioyed, wealth encreased, and rest obtained, that either soules or children shall haue the greater rest, like that foole in the Gospell, their marks are much amisse, for wealth and issue are lost both in an houre. Looke vpon the example of *Iob*, the death of his children, and decay of his wealth. Again, none must be hereby emboldened, to present their prayers before the face of the Almighty, for the maintenance of their children in worldly vanitie, to make that the onely end of all their desire, which is, to be more carefull for the thooe then the loote, for the rayment, then the

*Luk. 12. 32.*

*Luk. 12. 16.  
17. 18.*



Deut. 28. 12.

Psalm. 144.

12. 13. 14.

Ester 7. 10.

Esay 22. 20

the body, and for the body, then the soule: but this must be their direction, as the Lord commanded the Iewes; if they kept his Statutes, then should their oxen be strong to labour, their sheep bring forth thousands and ten thousands in their streets, their daughters like the polished corners of the Temple, and their sons as their fruitfull garners, which neuer are emptie. For vngodly *Haman* was hanged, though he were the Prince of Princes, but godly *Mordecai* was aduanced, which was as poore as the basest. *Shebna* was depriued of his office, because he was wicked, when godly *Eliakim* was promoted to his place: euen so it is not honor, but the feare of God that bringeth and sustaineth honour, that you must pray for your children: Kings for vngodlinesse were depriued of their seates and thrones of Maiestie, whereunto they were borne, much more will the Lord execute his iudgements of pouertie and slauiery vpon those that would be aduanced, and yet are wicked, for *Salomon* saith, that the prosperity of fooles slaieth them, and the Crowne doth not endure from generation to generation, yet the feare of the Lord abideth for euer.

Gen. 38. 18.

29.

4 Secondly, by this verse we may note, when they expressly make mention of *Thamar* the mother of *Pharez*, and with the posteritie of *Boaz* to be like his, the great blessing of God vpon that incestuous birth, for we know the historie, how that *Thamar* was the Daughter in law of *Iudah*, the wife and widow of his eldest sonne, dissembling her selfe to be a whore, by her apparell and place, had the company of her father in law, by whom she was conceiued of two sons, the elder was this *Pharez*, and the yonger *Zerach*: yet we see how the Lord doth magnifie this *Pharez* with a glorious and godly posteritie. By the which he teach vs these two profitable lessons, that the sinnes of the faithfull are forgiven, though they be neuer so great. We see this *Iudah* an excellent man, yet overcome in this action, had not any such plague inflicted on him, as *Ruben* his eldest brother, or *Simeon* and *Leui*, but he which couered and omitted

mitted the sinne of *Abraham* with *Hagar*, of *Jacob* with *Bilhah* and *Zilpah*, of this *Judah* with *Thamar*, *Lot* with his owne daughters, and such like; will also forgiue all the defaults of the godly vnto the end of the world. By the which we gather exceeding comfort, when we come to this perswasion that there is no condemnation to them that are in Iesus Christ, that the gates of hell shall not preuaile against the mercies of the Lord, that the victory of our faith shall conquer the world, when *Nash* shall be clesed from his drunkenness, *Moses* and *Aaron* from their doubting, *Miriam* from her murmuring, *Dauid* from his murther, *Peter* from his deniall of Christ, and all, because the Lord will couer the sinnes of his Saints, be they neuer so great, when he punisheth the faults of many thousand wicked persons with eternal damnation, although they haue not sinned with the like transgression.

5 Secondly, by this we learne, that the Lord doth not punish the children or the parents faults, if they commit not the like themselves: for this *Phares* begotten in incest, was blessed by the Lord, not onely with temporall glory in himselfe and his issue, but also with this, that he was made one of the fathers of Christ. And this teacheth vs, that this vpbraiding of men for their birth, be they, base borne or free borne, is no fruit of the word of God, but the malice of the Diuell, which first deceiued the parents, and now would discredit the childe. Let it not therefore, beloued, be any speech in our mouches, to shoote at them whom the Lord hath wounded by nature, any thought of our hearts to enuy their well-fare, were their parentage neuer so base, but pray for them, that though they proceed not of a sanctified birth, yet they may grow vp to a sanctified and holy life, to make a godly and a blessed end. And finally, let vs be encouraged vnto Religion by the fauour of God, which dealeth thus mercifully with his Saints, neuer suffering any thing to bee laid to the charge of his chosen, stopping the mouth of the diuell himselfe, that hee neuer rise in iudgement against the faithfull,

or bring any little sin of theirs into the remembrance of God, but washing them all in the lauer of regeneration, the blood of his Sonne, and will giue them white robes cleansed from filthinesse, that they may bee chaste virgins for the Lords seruice, and feed at his owne table for euermore: this consideration made *Dauid* to crie out, and say, *Oh when shall I come and appeare before the presence of God?* It made *Simeon* to say, *Now Lord let thy seruant depart in peace:* It caused *Paul* to utter these words, *I desire to bee dissolued, and to bee with Christ:* for blessed are the people that are in such a case, yea, blessed are the people whose God is the Lord. Thus much for this verse. Now let vs goe to the verse following.

6 In these three verses following, the holy Ghost declareth the blessing of God vpon this mariage of *Boaz* and *Ruth*. These words containe in them two parts, the first part is of *Boaz*, vers. 13. the second is of the women that were present at the trauell of *Ruth*. The first part sheweth, how *Boaz* taking *Ruth*, and vsing her as his wife, had the blessing of God, in conceiuing and bearing him a sonne: the other part of the women, is their reioyning with *Naomi* for this fruitfulnessse of *Ruth*, it comprehendeth two parts: the first, their thanksgiuing to God, vers. 14. in these words, *Blessed be God:* secondly, the matter of their thanksgiuing, in the words following: first, for *Boaz* his sake, in that God had left him to be *Naomies* kinsman: secondly, because this childe of *Ruthes*, her louing daughter in law, should renue her yeares, and cherish her old age: of these parts let vs briefly speake in order.

7 So *Boaz* took her. After the solemnitie of this mariage, in the presence of the people, and their prayers ended, which they powred forth in the behalfe of both these parties and their posteritie, *Boaz* proceedeth to the end of this action, and taketh *Ruth* to his house to be his wife, as a ductie of a kind and a godly husband. For all this while we must imagine that *Ruth* was absent from the place of this communication, and according

ding to the counsell of her mother, sate waiting at home, for some prosperous newes, and praying, no doubt, for a ioyfull successe of this desired mariage, out of this we gather.

First, the duetic of all godly husbands, which is to take their wiues and dwell with them, as this *Boaz* doth *Ruth*, for it is no doubt, but that hee presently went to the house of her mother, and thence tooke her, bringing her to his owne house, that there they might liue and loue together. This phrase of Scripture wee may finde vsed in many places, as in the historie of *Isaak*, how they tooke *Ribkah* his wife, and brought her into the tent of *Sara* his mother, and was comforted after his mothers death, where the holy Ghost doth not onely declare the kindnesse of *Isaak*, but also the commoditie of dwelling with a wife, for the presence of *Ribkah* caused her husband to forget the death of his mother; as if he had said, the presence of a wife is greater then the comfort of a mother. For this cause *Peter* exhorteth that husbands should dwell with their wiues, like men of vnderstanding, giuing honour to their wiues, as to weaker vessels, because they are the heires of the same grace, and that their prayers be not hindered, as if he had said, they must dwell together, and they must pray together; for as Christ is alway present with his Church, so husbands must keepe the companie of their wiues.

8 This point being euident both by reason and Religion, it condemneth the wandring abroad of many idle husbands, some which are neuer satisfied with riches, by markets and merchandize traouelling in the world, depriue their wiues of their due beneuolence, others for their pleasure walke from country to country, spending their dayes in pleasant disport among carnall and suspitious companions, leaue wife and family, to the sea of this world, like children in a shippe without guide or mariner; many are present, but to the discommoditie and discomfort of their poore vviues and children, oh how doe any of these persons

Gen. 24. 67.  
*Rebecca.*

*Rebecca.*

1. Pet. 3. 7.

persons take their wiues with godly mindes either to dwell or pray together? How can the Vine prosper when the root is vncovered; and how can women be comforted, when their couer is taken from them, I meane their husbands, as *Abimelech* the King of Gerar told vnto *Sara*: is not the body dead without a head? yea if it be but a minute of an houre: do not then our wandring youthes murthier the body of their owne family, being absent about vnecessary businesse, sometime for the space of many monthes? Is not the bodie maimed if it want but the least member, yea, but a finger, how is then those households wounded, where the chiefeest parts, either husbands or wiues, be wanting or wandring abroad, and finally, what is this but to diuorce themselues for a season without any lawfull cause, to put a sunder them, whom the Lord hath ioyned together, to breake the fellowship of holy wedlocke, to despise the societie of godly mariage, to lay open themselues to the temptations of the Diuels, and to thrust both bodies and soules into danger of damnation? This I speake not, as if all absence from either party (with consent for a time about necessary businesse) were vterly vnlawfull: for so *Isaiah*, *Moses*, *Aaron*, *Dauid*, and the Apostles, should be faulty; but I speake against this wilfull departing of one from the other, without either consent of man or wife, conscience of the law of God, or regard to their owne persons, for the company of these twaine is greater then parents or children: for which the Apostle saith, that if one be a beleeuing person, and the other an infidell, yet they must not depart if they be willing to dwell with them, and he giueth no liberty for breaking their company, except it bee to pray the more feruently, and wisheth also that if they doe so, yet it must be but for a season, that Satan tempt them not, so great regard must be had of the fellowship in mariage, that the zeale of prayer, the worship of God, the loue of our owne parents, the encrease of wealth, and the pleasures of the world, must not separate, without the voice of both parties, and yet the time

2. Cor. 7. 13

Verse 5.

time must be but short for auoiding the temptation of Satan, and the danger of their owne damnation.

Secondly, by this wee may gather, who is the author and sender of children, which is the Lord: for this Scripture saith, that *the Lord gaue her to conceive*, for as *Paul* saith of the corne that is cast vpon the earth, that it increaseth neither by the planter nor yet by the waterer; but by the Lord: so must we say by the seed of mankind, that it lieth neither in the husband nor in the wife, but in the blessing of God: for which cause, when *Rabel* said to her husband *Iacob*, giue mee children or else I die; he answered in anger, am I in Gods stead, that kept thee from the fruit of thy wombe? as if hee had said, it is God that sendeth issue, and not man: therefore *Dauid* saith, that children are the possession of the Lord, and the fruit of the wombe is his reward. By the which we are taught many excellent and worthy lessons: first, that seeing they come from the author of euery good gift, we haue a ready way where to aske them, when we want them: for as when we want wisdom, the Apostle saith, we must aske wisdom at the hand of God: so when we want children, we must aske children at the hand of God. When *Ribkah* was barren, by her husbands prayer she was made fruitfull: so barren women by their husbands prayers haue been made the mothers of many children. *Annab* obtained by her prayer at the Temple, not only *Samuel*, but also three other sonnes and two daughters. Oh let vs not be vexed then for many children, but let euery one aske confidently by the will of God, and they shall receiue (if it so please him) plentifully to their owne desire. Secondly, seeing children come of the Lord, wee are taught to vse them as the blessings of God, and as the childe by nature should first know his mother that bare him, so we by instruction should first teach our children the feare of God that gaue them, it is farre better for many children that they had neuer been borne, except their parents had more knowledge to till their mindes with the immortall seede of God his holy word, then

to

1. Cor. 3. 6:

Gen. 30. 1. 2

Psal. 137. 3.

Gen. 29. 21.  
Rebecca.

1. Sam. 2. 21



to Looke vpon the Sunne, as the condemned person which commeth out of prison, and so goeth to execution, in like manner children, without the knowledge of the feare of God, do come from the wombe of their mothers, which is their prison, to the fire of hell, which is the place of execution. Oh my beloued, looke vpon your tender children, and so often as you see them, you behold the blessings of God vpon you, make much of their soules by praying for their saluation, you haue brought them into the world, leaue them not to the Diuell.

10 Thirdly, seeing children are the gift of God, these which haue children, haue greater account to make, then thote which haue none, for of him to whom much is giuen, shall much bee required, and they to whom the Lord hath giuen children and seruants, lands and cattels, shall answere for euery one of these to the Lord: therefore parents must finish their reckoning, which they must giue to the Lord, and let not one farthing of their debt be omitted, for he will plague them as well for not doing their duties to their owne children, as gracelesse children for contemning of God. And this one consideration should mitigate the desire of posteritie, because, if they abuse them, their owne damnation shall be the greater, if they be vnruely, they bring nothing but sorrow to their parents: if they bee godly, the world will hate them, and if they be wicked the Diuell will haue them. Were it not a pitifull sight to see the father burned, for murthring his sonne, how much more grieuous is it to see both father and sonne, mother and daughter, husband and wife, master and seruant, mistresse and maides, Pastors and people, to goe all to damnation together, because the former did not guide the latter: oh would God that the desire to escape this iudgement, would sinke into the hearts of all, that wee might euery one addiect our liues to holines, our minds to knowledge, our bodies to obedience, our harts to vnderstanding, our children to instruction, our seruants to religion, and ail our soules to saluation.

11 Thirdly, by this we gather, that it is a greater blessing to be the mother of a sonne, then the parent of a daughter, if it so please God to send them: for in this place the holy Ghost saith, that *the Lord gaue her, and shee conceived and brought forth a sonne*, as if hee had said, the Lord gaue her, her owne desire, and the best issue, which was a man-childe: for this cause our Saviour saith, that a woman forgetteth her paines in trauaile, so soone as a man-child is borne into the world. Therefore it is that the Lord promised *Abraham* a sonne, that he gaue *Zacharie* and *Elizabet* a sonne, and finally therfore the Lord calleth vs all his sonnes, as a father reioyeth more for a sonne, so the Lord reioyeth in the saluation of the faithfull. By this wee are taught to magnifie the name of the Almighty, for euery one his benefits in their degree, and if we want any, by prayer to craue it at the hands of God, alwayes remembering that we leaue the end of our desires to be agreeable to his will. And heere we see the prayer of the people in the former verse to be in part fulfilled, when the Lord did so soone blesse this good old man, by giuing him a sonne: for it is no doubt but the holy Ghost doth so presently after their prayer adde the conception and his birth, that hee might stirre vs vp with greater zeale, to desire the prayers of the faithfull, which are alwayes auailable in the presence of the Lord. Come therefore my brethren, and let vs fulfill the desire of the Lord, and account more of the petitions of the godly, then all the possessions of the wealthie: by prayer the earth is made fruitfull, and the heauens drop downe abundance: by praier famine is removed, warre appeased, and the wrath of God pacified, and the health of the bodie recovered, by prayer wisdom is encreased, faith confirmed, remission of sins obtained, the barren woman made a fruitfull mother of many children, the dayes of life lengthened, peace of countries and conscience prolonged, and the kingdome of heauen eternally inherited. Therefore those which cannot pray, abhorre the presence of God, are weary

Ioh. 16. 26.

Gen. 18. 10.

Luke 1. 13.

of our assemblies, forsake Sermons and Congregati-  
ons, depart from the fellowship of the faithfull, and  
haue their sinnes sealed vp, their liues accursed, and  
their soules euerlastingly condemned.

12 *And the woman.* Now we must proceed to the se-  
cond part of this Scripture, wherein is declared what  
issue and effect this wrought in other, for so soone as  
the childe was borne, it did not onely bring comfort to  
the parents, but also ioy and gladnes to the godly Ci-  
tizens of Bethlehem: among whom these women are  
reported by the holy Ghost (which no doubt, were pre-  
sent at the deliuey of *Ruth*) to magnifie the name of  
God, for this so great a benefit bestowed vpon the old  
woman: although her children were dead, yet her name  
might be recouered by her louing daughter in law. By  
this we first of all obserue the dutie of all the faithfull,  
which is to reioyce with them that reioice, and to weep  
with them that weepe: for as these godly Iewish women  
reioyce with *Naomi* for the fruitfulness of *Ruth*, so must  
you euery one bee like affected for the blessings that  
are powred vpon our brethren. The like vnto this, may  
we reade of the neighbours and kindred of *Elizabeth*,  
hearing of the wonderfull mercy of God vnto her, they  
reioyced with her. This teacheth vs the same duty, that  
the ioy of our brethren should be our reioycing, and  
their sorrow our lamentation, for there is no fellow-  
ship, but there must bee a feeling of the same ioyes or  
miseries, not onely in publike affaires, which respect  
the whole Common-wealth, but also in priuate busi-  
nesse, the benefit of euery particular person, The head  
is sore when the stomacke is sicke, the hand is griued  
when the foot is maimed, and euery part of the bodie  
being in prosperitie, reioyceth together. For this cause  
*Paul* biddeth vs to endure all things with the same  
minde, meaning that euery mans minde should be like  
his brothers, either in sorrow or reioycing. But is this  
the fellowship that raigneth among vs in these dayes?  
or rather are wee not merriest when our neighbours  
are tormented? and doth it not grieue vs to see others  
prosper

Rom. 12. 12.

15.

Luke 1. 58.

Rom. 12. 16.

prosper besides vs? yes surely, for there is no more heartie and vnfaigned friendship among men in our dayes, then is betweene the hauke and the birde, when either of them is taken, the other reioyceth. This is the cause that men are no more accounted of, after wealth faileth, friendship withdraweth when they stand most in need, and least pitie is in the greatest extremitie. Euery tree is greene in the Spring, euery birde will sing in Summer, and euery false-hearted Christian, will fawne vpon their brethren in prosperitie, but be ashamed of their want in aduersitie: yea, there neuer wanteth priuie repiners and grudgers, at the wealth and wel-fare of euery one: for some say, it is too much if their neighbours corne encrease; others say, it is too little, when they are vexed and troubled by losse of their goods, and this maketh many medlers in other mens matters, many back-biters for other mens vvel-fare, many enuie that any should haue their shares as good as themselues, like him in the Gospell, whose eye was euill, because the Lords hand was good, and as all the waues of the sea do beate vpon the shore, so all the braines in the world do breathe against the prosperous.

13 Secondly, the manner of their reioycing must be considered, which the holy Ghost hath set downe in these words, *Blessed bee the Lord*: wherein they testifie perfect ioy, both to the Lord, by praying him, and giuing thanks; and also to *Naomi*, vnto whom nothing could be more acceptable, then to heare the name of God to be blessed for her sake. To blesse in the Scripture, whensoever it is referred to God, signifieth to praise or giue thanks: as when *Zacharie* saith, *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for hee hath visited and redeemed his people*: that is, praised bee the Lord God of Israel. Likewise the Apostle *Paul* saith, *Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Iesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all consolation*, that is, praised be God. And in another place he saith, *If thou blesse with the Spirit, how shall he that occupieth the roome of the vnlearned say, Amen to thy thanks*—

Luke 1.68.

2.Cor. 1.8.

1.Cor. 14.16

1. Cor. I. 11.

Exod. 15.

Iude.

1. Sam. 25.

4.

Luke 2. 68.

Luk. 19. 38.

Reuel. 19. 1.

2.

5.

*thanksgiuing* : that is, if thou giue thanks with the Spirit. In this place it is of the first sence, as if these women had said, We praise thee O God, that thou hast looked on the miserie of *Naomi*, and hast referued her a kinsman, by whom the name of the dead might bee raised vpon the inheritance, and his owne honor continued in Gods people. By the which wee are taught what manner of ioy the faithfull are to haue for their brethren, namely such as may redound to the praise of God, according to the saying of the Apostle, that he vvhich reioyceth, must reioyce in the Lord : for as bodily exercise profiteth little, so carnall ioy profiteth lesse, such as is the framing of vaine songs, giuing ouer our labours, and to reioyce in pastimes, and such as is vsed in ringing of belles, and the like sort, being onely for man and not for God. Therefore heere wee haue an excellent manner of reioycing, when God is glorified by our mirth. Thus we reade *Moses* and *Aaron* with their sister *Miriam* did, after they came out of Egypt. Thus did *Deborah* and *Barack* after the victorie against *Sisera*. Thus did the vvomen after the victorie of *Saul* and *Dauid*, vvhen they came from the slaughter of the Philistines. Thus did *Zacharie* when his tongue vvvas restored vnto him. Thus did the children of Ierusalem crie, vvhen Christ came riding vpon the Ass. Thus doe the faithfull reioyce after the destruction of Romes Antichrist, singing, Praised be God, Saluation, and Honor, and Glorie, and Power to our Lord God : And the Lord crieth out of heauen vnto vs. Prayse the Lord all yee his seruants, and vvho soeuer feare him both small and great. Therefore, beloued, seeing it becommeth the iust to bee thankful, let vs praise the Lord both euening and morning, and let vs not see a sparrow light on the ground, without some praise to God, by whose prouidence all things are grounded, by whose will all things are ordered, for whose glory are all things appointed ; that we should euermore giue thanks to him that sitteth on the highest heauens, and ruleth the mightiest Princes, appoin-



appointing the measure for the sea, and calling the whole world to iudgement, in whose presence is light and life for evermore.

14 Thirdly, the matter of their thanksgiving, must be considered, for they praise God, because he had kept a kinsman aliue for *Naomi*, whose name should be continued in the people of God; so that in plaine words they commend the kindnes of God, because he had so provided for this godly *Naomi*, as she might be comforted by his meanes, and his name continued by her daughter, and all three eased by this one child. By the which we are taught these two profitable lessons: first, that we must magnifie God for the life of our friends, so doe these Iewes for the life of *Boaz*, by whom the Lord brought such great comfort to both these destitute and desolate widowes, for as we are sorie for their deathes, when it is too late, so must we be thankfull for their life, when yet they are with vs: the sonne for the life of his father, and the father for the sonne, the wife for her husband, and the husband for his wife, the seruant for his master, the subiects for their Prince, the people for their Teachers, and the daughters for their mothers. There are few of these, but they bring much benefit vnto vs, and no small comfort doth arise by their presence, which wee shall better perceiue when we want them, then now we enioy them, and for these the Apostle also vvilleth vs to pray, and one cause of these two miracles vpon *Lazarus* and *Dorcas*, was that their life might bee prolonged with the Church of God, and more kindnes shewed to their godly friends: Secondly, by this all those that are able to bestow any kindnes vpon other, are taught their duties to their owne kindred, that especially they be carefull for the reliefe of their pouertie, the maintenance of their dignitie, the preservation of their honestie, and the nourishing of their owne flesh, for vnto that end hath the Lord encreased their substance, continued their name, prolonged their dayes, and aduanced their seates, that they may bee more able to doe for their

1. Tim. 2.1.



1. Tim. 5. 2.

poore brethren which are commended to them by the Lord, committed by the world, and compelled by nature, which are bone of their bone, and flesh of their flesh, that they might bee maintained as your owne selues: when *Dauid* was made King, hee aduanced his sisters sonnes, and his kinsmen: when *Saul* was King, he aduanced *Abner* and other his friends: and wee know that many of Christs Apostles were his kinsmen: vnto the which end *Paul* exhorteth, that poore widowes bee provided for by their friends, that the Church bee not charged with them. This condemneth the forgetfulness of many in our age, which being in wealth, will scant acknowledge their poore kindred, whereby they shew themselves like vnnaturall beasts, as if the Lord were not able to bring them downe to the foot-stoole in the place of the other, that they might crie & not be heard.

Psalm. 110.  
194.

15 And this shall In this verse is the second part of their ioy, in so much as now *Ruth* hath brought forth a sonne, it is better to *Naomi* then seuen sonnes, for seuen is taken for many, and not for any definit number, as when *Dauid* saith, that hee praiseth God seuen times a day, that is, many times euery day. Also they protest in this verse, that it reioyceeth them to see *Naomi* so comforted with the birth of this childe, as that now her lite is restored, whereas before it was dying like an old stub, which had no greene twigs vpon it, but now that one being shot forth, she reuiueth and gathereth comfort in her old yeares. By this we see the dutie of parents, which is to reioyce when their children encrease, and they see their childrens children: these Iewish women, no doubt, but spake by the experience of their owne dayes, that as a woman lying at the point of death, being recovered, is ioyfull & thankfull for the same: euen so old persons haue new liues in their childrens children; for which cause they ought to be thankfull to the Lord, for the comfort of their children, who may likewise reioice when they see their parents delight in their offspring. Thus, no doubt, but *Abraham* did, when hee saw *Isaac* and *Jacob*, his son *Isaaks* children, being borne about

about fifteene yeares before his death: this did *Iacob*, when he saw *Manassib* and *Ephraim*, his son *Iosephs* children, kissing and embracing them, and saying, I had not thought to see thy face any more, but the Lord hath let me see thy seed and posterity; as if he had said, I thanke God for seeing thee, but I reioyce that I see thy children also. And truly, this I am sure will godly aged parents doe, who haue these for their examples, of faith and conuersation, that they might with more thankfulness praise the Lord, who letteth them see their childrens children, and with greater comfort reioyce in them, that were borne of their owne bodies, but with greatest ioy and most willing mindes commend their withered age, and all worne yeares to the hands of the Lord; who hath multiplied their seed in this life, and will glorifie themselves in the life to come. Now let vs giue praise to God.

Gen. 48. 10.  
11.

## The fifteenth Lecture.

*Ruth*, Chap. 4. verse, 16. 17.

- 16 *And Naomi tooke the childe and laid it in her lap, and became nurse vnto it.*  
17 *And the women her neighbours gaue it a name, saying, there is a childe borne to Naomi, and called the name thereof Obed: the same was the father of Ishai the father of Dauid.*



N the former words wee heard the last Sabbath, the prayer and thankgiuing of the people, or the women of Bethlehem, for the birth of this sonne of *Boaz*, and the comfort of *Naomi*: but now in these words the holy Ghost proceedeth to the education and circum-

cision of the childe in these two verses: vvherein the holy Ghost deliuereth vnto vs these things: first, that *Naomi* tooke the care of the education of this childe, verse 16. Secondly, the naming of the childe by the neighbours, the vvomen of Bethlehem, which they gaue vnto it by occasion of their owne vvords, vvhen they said in the fifteenth verse, that hee should cherish her, namely, *Naomi*; and therefore they call him *Hobab*, vvvhich signifieth seruing: thereby signifying, that he should serue for the comfort of *Naomi*: of these parts let vs briefly speake in order, as the Spirit of God shall giue vtterance, and the time permit.

2 And *Naomi* tooke the child. After the mercy of God in the blessing of *Ruth* with a sonne, who was the onely heire vnto the house of *Elimelech*, the husband of *Naomi*, which brought no small ioy to the old woman, to see her name, and the name of her family reuiued in the birth of this sonne, when it vvas viterly decayed in the sight of the world, for shee vvas old and a stranger in *Moab*, and had no hope of any moe children, neither was it likely that her daughter in law (their husbands being dead), would returne from their countrey and kindred vnto a strange people, with whom they had small acquaintance, euen none at all, *Naomi* their mother in law excepted, so that the hope of their posteritie being buried in *Moab*, the life of her family must needs decay in *Bethlehem*. Therefore her returne to her owne countrey, was a fauour of God vnto her, and raising vp the mind of *Ruth* to be partaker of her iourney, and companion in her trauaile, was an especial comfort to her wearied age, but providing so honorable a marriage for her, and making her so fruitfull a wife in short time, was the life of *Naomies* death, the reuiuing of her family, the restoring of her hope, and the resurrection of her dead sons, for the continuance of their names, in the gate of their places: and therefore, she like a ioyfull and thankfull grand-mother, for discharge of her conscience, loue of the infant, and ease of

of hir Daughter, becommeth a fellow-nurse for the better education of the child, out of the which we note.

3 First, that as wee haue heard how the miseries of *Naomi* were cast vpon her together, so now the mercies of God are multiplied in the same, or greater measure: For as then her woe was begunne by the death of her husband, continued through her long dwelling with the wicked *Moabites*, and redoubled through the death of her two sonnes: So now it falleth againe as the darknesse departeth at the dawning of the day, and giueth place to the light of the Sunne, so her miseries are repealed, first, with the louing and constant fellowship of her daughter in law *Ruth*, who was as a careful husband to her, in labouring for her liuing, and a blessed child to increase her Posteritie: Againe, she now was in quiet, dwelling among the people of God, enioying the companie of the faithfull, and the fellowship of her friends: moreouer, her posterity is restored in the fruitfulnessse of *Ruth*, and she, euen she her selfe liueth to see the day when all this falleth vpon her, to the endlesse comfort of her withered age, and present praise of the name of God. Thus we see it is a righteous thing with God, first to wound, and then to heale, first to strike, and then to stroke, first to cast downe, and then to lift vp: for this is certainly the cup of all the faithfull, that they must taste of many bitter afflictions, before they come to the possession of eternall blessednesse, yea of worldly miserie, they must sustaine some crosse, before they can be thankfull enough for that which they quietly inioy. So wee reade of *Iob*, how in one day he had his Corne burnt, his Cattell stolne, and his children slaine; this was bitter vnto him for many dayes, yet in the end hee was restored two for one, and saw more Sonnes and more beautifull daughters, yea, his childrens children, to his vspeakeable comfort. The like may bee said of innocent *Ioseph*, he was rebuked by his father, hated and sold by his brethren, imprisoned by his Master, forgotten by *Pharaohes* butler, all these were no small discouragements to so yong a man, yet in the end hee was ad-

*Iob. 1. 14.*

15. 16. 17.

& 42. 12.

13.

*Gen. 37. 10.*

11.

advanced to the highest step of honor, as a recompence for all the tribulations he had endured. I may also adde this of *Dauid*, being persecuted by *Saul*, betrayed by the Inhabitants of *Keilah*, driven to the *Philistines* his sworn enemies, to craue a dwelling of them, seeing many martyred for his sake, in the end had the possession of the kingdome of *Iudah*, and after of *Israel*, which was the gift of the Lord, the reward of his afflictions, and his religion: By the which we may see the hope of the godly: not that which they feele, but that which they may lawfully looke for, the ease of their paines, the remedy of their grieffe, the comfort of their troubles, and the end of their misery to be speedily redressed if with patience they looke and wait for the pleasure of the Lord:

*Psal. 3.*

*Heb. 6. 19.*

4 Therefore the godly say with *Dauid*, if ten thousand compasse them round about, they will not be afraide, for the Lord is the eye witnesse of all their miseries: the hot furnace of *Babylon* feareth them not: the *Lions* den cannot drive them to dishonour God, if flames of fire consume their bodies to ashes, the darts of *Sathan* pierce their soules to the quicke, the reproches of the world destroy their names, and the enemies of God spoile their substance, yet they are not left destitute, for their faith ouercommeth the world, their patience, all their afflictions, and their loue of God, their desire of earthly prosperitie. All which caused the Apostle to say, that hope was the anchor of the soule, meaning that as the anchor stayeth the shippe in the midst of all the waues, though they be neuer so great and huge: in like maner the hope of the godly keepeth them in the barke of *Christ's* Church, among the thousands of worldly tribulations: For *Dauid* saith, great are the troubles of the righteous: but the Lord deliuereth them out of al, as if he had said, the righteous and godly are afflicted to this end, that the Lord might shew his power in their deliuerance: And in another place he complaining of his sufferings, and the sorrow of his soule: yet concludeth with this figuratiue speech: Why

Psal. 13. 4.  
& 43. 7.

Why art thou so sadde, O my soule ? and why art thou cast downe within mee ? trust still in the Lord, for by him I haue deliuerance against all my paines & griefe. Euen so do I say to all my poore Brethren in the world, why are you so sadde ? if you want maintenance, the earth is the Lords : If friendship, the hearts of Kings are in his hands, as the Riuer of waters : if libertie, he can breake a-sunder the yron gates, and deliuer the Prisoners from their tormentors : if health, in his presence there is ioy and life for euermore : if children, he maketh the barren woman to bring forth many children : if apparrell, he clothed the Lillies about the vialtie of *Salomon* : if meat, he can multiply the least morsels into the greatest measures : and finally, if defence, he giueth his royall Angels charge ouer the poorest of the godly, that the violence of Princes, and the force of the Deuill himselfe, shall neuer goe beyond the decree and purpose of the Lord ? Therefore if gripes of griefe, and torments of sorrow doe lodge with vs all the night, yet ioy shall come in the morning, when the poore shall be restored, the sick recouered, the sorrowfull comforted, the faithfull rewarded, and the wicked eternally plagued.

5 Secondly, by this Verse we also gather a worthe example of a godly Grand-mother, which for the case of her daughter, the loue of the Infant, and the thankfulness shee owed to God, shee became a fellow-nurse vnto this yong Sonne of *Boaz* : for although the words of the Scripture be these, that *shee became nurse vnto the child* : yet the meaning is not, that shee tooke it from the Mother, but that her tender care ouer it was such, that during the weakenesse of *Ruth*, and absence of his Mother, shee laied it in her lap, and was as carefull for it, as any Nurse that was hired to that dutie ; for *Naomi* could not bee a Nurse in these old dayes of hers, without Husband or milke : which we know is the chiefest nourishment for yong children, and therefore a Nurse in this place, is taken for one that had a great care to procure the well-fare and ease of the child.

By



Gen. 50. 29

Gen. 30. 3.

By the which we note another dutie of aged Parents, which liue to see their childrens children; namely, that they bee as Nurser vnto them, to bee as carefull for them as their owne, for therefore the Lord suffereth them to see the increase of their seede, that they might couer and nourish it in their owne presence. For this cause wee may reade, that the sonnes of *Manasses*, and his Sonnes Sonnes were brought vp on the knees of *Ioseph*, their great Grand-father, for this laying in the lap or on the knee, signifieth a most tender care ouer the Infants, that they bee alwaies not only in the presence, but also in the hands of their Grand-parents, as *Rachel* when shee gaue her Maide *Bilba* vnto *Iacob*, and said that shee might bring forth vpon her knees, that is, shee would bee as carefull in the nourishment of them, as if they were her owne. Then by this they are taught their duties, vpon whom the Lord hath vouchsafed to bestow this blessing, that they may see their childrens children, namely, that it is required at their hands, that they prouide for their education, good instruction, and bringing vp, for they may say as *Laban* said to his Daughters children, that they are their owne, and therefore the care of the bringing vp dependeth vpon them: wee see the little twigs at the top to be nourished as well by the root, as the boughes that grow out of the body of the tree, euen so Grand-parents prouide as well for the maintenance of their childrens issue, as for their owne: so that in all kindnesse they must be intreated, in all wisdom bee instructed, with all carefulnesse be corrected, and with all Religion bee gouerned, for alas, if the twigge faile, there can be no fruit, and if your seede be corrupt, there will come but a hard harvest, so if your childrens children be not ouer-seene by you that are Parents and Rulers of both, your name will decay, your familie die, and your posteritie be vterly forgotten.

6 Thirdly, in this place we may profitably enquire about the nursing of children, seeing *Naomi* is said to be the Nurse of this child of *Ruth*: Whether it be law-

full

full at all to put out children to Nurse from their owne Mother, or whether the care of Parents be not to bring vp their children in their infancie, in their owne persons or presence, or else commit the tuition of them to other. Vnto the first question I answere, that euery woman being in health of bodie and minde, is bound by the word of God to nurse her owne children, and the reasons for the confirmation hereof are these, first because the Lord in the creation of their bodies, hath giuen to euery Woman breasts, which are the meanes whereby children suck their nourishment: and therefore either the Lord created their breasts in vaine, or else they sinne, if they set them not to worke: if any say, that the Lord did giue the breasts not for any necessitie that they are bound so to doe, but that they might bee furnished with the meanes, if they had the pleasure to doe it, to whom I answere by the like example, the Lord hath giuen to euery one hands to worke, eies to see, eares to heare, & tongues to speake, is it in the choise of men, to cut off their hands, to pull out their eies, to stop vp their eares, and to keepe their tongues in silence all their life, and neuer vse them, as many women doe to their naturall breasts? I thinke not, for if they should, they must deface the workmanship of God; dismember their owne bodies, and murder the parts of mankinde.

7 Therefore as the Lord hath giuen to euery one hands, euery one must worke, or else hee is accursed, vlesse they will bee Idolls: of whom *Dauid* speaketh, they haue hands and handle not, eyes and see not, eares and heare not, feete and walke not, noses and smell not, and such are women that haue plentifull breasts, and yet giue no suck. Secondly, the example of all the godly confirme it, as wee see in *Sarah*, which nursed her Sonne *Isack*, in the mother of *Moses*, which was carefull that her Child should bee nursed by no other then her selfe: in *Ma-noahs* wife the Mother of *Sampson*: so did *Bathsabab* the mother of King *Salomon*, being a Queene in Israel,

the



Gen. 21. 7.

Exod. 2. 8. 9

Iud. 13. 42.

1. Cant. 8. 1.

1. S<sup>a</sup>. 1. 23.

Luc. 1. 80.

Luc. 2. 7.

Psal. 12. 9.

the wife of King *Dauid*; yet shee thought it her dutie to take her owne child and nurse it: I will speake nothing of *Hannah*, of *Elizabeth* the wife of *Zacharie* and mother of *Iohn Baptist*, of the Virgin *Marie* which gaue suck to the Lord of glorie, *Iesus Christ* her Sauour, and of the Mother of *Dauid*, all which are as patternes of naturall affection, for all the godly women in the world to imitate, and what blessing was powred vpon their children, who knoweth not. Therefore either women must follow their godly examples, or shew some Charter of their libertie about these, or proclaime open disobedience to God, and the godly, because they swarue from his holy word, and their most pure and worthie example: but it is better to obey God then Men, and to bee ruled by the troublesome liues of the faithfull, then by the peaceable, and pleasant deuises of all the Gentle-women in the world whatsoeuer:

Rom. 1. 30.

8 Thirdly, it is a signe of the want of loue and naturall affection in the Parents (as the Apostle speaketh) when the Mothers doe not bestow the labour to giue their owne children the naturall milke: for if they had the same naturall feeling of their duties to their children, they could not (hauing no occasion) commit the nourishing of their children to strangers, who can neuer be so inwardly kinde to the Infants, as the mothers are, or either ought to bee: therefore, although they pretend a kinde of sorrow for their childrens absence or departing from them, yet it is like the lamentation of *Esau*, which wept when hee could not get the blessing, whereas hee sold it before, and was the only cause of his owne reprobation: so women weepe at the departure of their children: whereas it lyeth in their owne power to keepe them in their owne possession, and more thankfull would the child bee in his heart to his Mother, if shee had bestowed the labour to nurse him.

9 Fourthly, it is not so naturall for the child to be nursed where he was not borne, for the same bodie whereof hee had his being, is most fit for his feeding,

as

as wee see a plant doth best prosper when it is grafted where it sprung vp first of all, then being remoued into another ground, so the bodies of children doe grow more freely, and like more chearefully with their owne Mothers milke, then withall the world beside, and the ancientest Physitians say, that it were also better for the Mothers if they gaue themselues to this labour, therefore they doe but hinder their owne Infants, borne of their owne bodies, and as it were keepe them from their naturall well-fare, when they giue them to bee made another nature, which is by their nursing and feeding. These causes and more also being duely and carefully considered, you shall finde it a greater sinne, to giue your children to other to be nursed, then heretofore you conceiued of it, so that you must for this one thing, condemne the vse of your breasts, ( which were the creation of God, and the practise of the ancient godly Women, which were euery way as noble as any aliue ) forsake the tender loue that a Mother ought to beare to her innocent Babe, bring your childrens bodies to a second, yea a contrarie disposition and complexion, and stoppe vp the plentifull conduits of streaming Milke in your breasts, to the losse and hinderance of your owne health: Therefore, if any haue any power to performe this naturall duetie to their children, let them practise it: for all the carnall reasons of the world must not preuaile against the least collection of the word of God. But some will say, admit that any through negligence doe put their children to be nursed of other, doth the fault only rest in the Parents, and nothing in the nurse? to whom I answere, if it bee vnlawfull for the Parents to giue, it is also vnlawfull for the nurse to take: so that whatsoeuer is said against the one, may also bee brought against the other. But in causes of weakenesse in the woman, danger to the child, or sicknesse in either of both, it is not only a dutie of necessity, but of conscience, to nourish and cherish the children of other.

There-

Gen. 24. 19

Gen. 21. 12

13. &amp; 24. 4

2. King. 11.

23.

Therefore, although the Mother had the nursing of their children, yet there were others also like pety-nurses, which had some especiall care in the keeping of the children, as we may reade of the nurse of *Rebecca*, which was the true vse of nurses for the ease of their Mother, to take the custodie of the children in all things, saue only in giuing them suck, and therefore is it, that wee may reade in ancient Histories, that one child had many nurses, that is, many to attend the well-fare and nourishment of the Infant: of this sort was *Naomi* at this present, who tooke vpon her some care of this Son of *Boaz*, that they both might be more diligent for the education thereof. Now for the other question, whether it bee lawfull for the Parents during, all the time of the infancie thereof, if the Mother bee not able to giue it suck, to commit their children to other to bee brought vp: I answere, that euery man and woman are bound to see their childrens first instruction, that is, if it be possible, to haue them in their keeping at their first entrance into knowledge, and when they are first of all capable of any goodnesse. So we reade *Isaack* remayned with his Father *Abrabam* in the time of infancie, when God commanded *Ismael* to bee cast out: so *Iacob* kept little *Beniamin* with him: neither would he depart from him vnto any, till *Simeon* was bound in Egypt: so wee reade of the King *Iosh*, whom his Aunt *Iehoshabab* hid from the rage of *Athaliah*, who was brought vp in the house of her husband *Iehoiadab*, where he was most worthily instructed in the feare of the Lord: so we reade our Sauour Christ kept, till he was twelue yeares old, with his Mother and supposed Father, and after he had beene at Ierusalem, hee was obedient to them till the yeare of his preaching, which was when he came to the age of thirtie yeares. Therefore the cōclusion of all this is, that neither the nursing nor instruction of our children, must be deferred to other, at the least so as we seeme not but to be many waies as carefull for them, as if they were in our presence, to bee euermore mindfull for the wealth of their bodies, & health of their soules.

Fourthly



11 Fourthly, and lastly, by these words we may gather, how great and excellent is this worke, the bringing vp of children, for which the Lord hath expressed in his Word, that it is required that many should be applied, for in this place wee see *Naomi* and *Ruth* bestow their labours for the education of this new borne babe: and we haue heard that *Rebecca* had a nurse that came with her from her fathers house, to the Land where *Abraham* dwelt, which signifieth vnto vs, that neither their infancie can be vnfed, nor their youth vnruled; for this is not so base a worke as many thinke it, that one is enough, if not too much, to take the care of their children, for we know we are easily drawne to many inconueniences, neither can the parents bee present to foresee all, but if any be helpers in this businelle, their care is much eased, their children lesse endangered; their wel-fare better prouided, and the parents dutie better discharged. Euery flocke hath a keeper, beside the owner, euery garden hath a dresser, beside the master; and if it be possible, let euery childe haue an ouer-seer beside the parents, for alas, the silly infant is soone cast into the fire, falleth into the water, ouerturned with the winde, and euery beast is ready to worke his destruction: all which may bee wisely prevented; though not with the presence, yet with the counsell and care of the parents, by prouiding such carefull persons to be their guides, as may also defend them when they are absent.

12 And the women her neighbours. In this verse is the second part, which concerneth the naming of the child, where the holy Ghost doth declare vnto vs the persons that named the child to be the women of *Bethlehem*, the neighbours of *Naomi*, which no doubt was then giuen to the childe, at the eight day, which was the circumcision, according as wee see in the historie of *Iohn Baptist*, after the law of the Lord, calling him by the name of *Obed*, which signifieth seruing, or a seruant, shewing how he should serue for the comfort of *Naomi*, and his mother.



By this we first of all note and obserue, that it is the duty of the faithful to be helpers one to another in the seruice to God, and admonitions of their duties: for heere the childe being circumcised, was accompanied with many godly women, whose deuice they vsed, and followed in the naming of the childe. Indeed we may often reade that the parents gaue names to the children, sometimes the fathers, sometimes the mothers, and sometimes the Lord himselfe, as in many persons we may perceiue, but we neuer reade that the people were so kind to helpe in this matter, and to further the dutie of any godly minded (only this place excepted) so that these women are a most godly example for all the faithfull to behold, how they must further and help one another in the cause of Religion: for the naming of children in old time was very excellent, when they were carefull by their earthly and outward titles, to admonish them of their inward and heauenly duties. And that which these did in this one, must we doe also in all other duties, to draw more and more to the loue of Religion: as we reade the Apostles did one another, when they came to the first knowledge of the Messiah: for as a little leuen seasoneth a whole lumpe; euen so a few godly persons may draw a great many to Religion. Therefore this one dutie of all other, belongeth to the flocke of Christ, that they helpe one another in the workes of Christianitie. When the Ruler of the Temple his daughter was sicke, for the little childe he went to our Sauour, by which meanes he recouereth her life, this was the dutie of a godly father: when the man sicke of the palsey could not come to Christ, foure of his neighbours brought him to his presence, and the Lord forgau him: this was charitie and the duetie of neighbours: When *Dorcas* was dead, the women sent for *Peter*, who being come, she was restored to life. And thus parents must helpe forward their children, neighbours their fellowes, and euery man one another: if they want knowledge, let vs teach them knowledge out of the pure word of God: if they cannot pray,

pray, let vs pray with them, and for them, to the Almighty God, if they trauell to heare the Word, let vs trauell with them to encourage their carefulnesse: but of this matter we haue often spoken. Now let vs giue praise to God.

## The sixteenth Lecture.

*Ruth. Chap. 4. verse, 18. 19. 20. 21. 22.*

- 18 These are the generations of Pharez: Pharez begate Chetron.  
 19 Chetron begate Ram; Ram begate Hamminadab.  
 20 Hamminadab begate Naschon, Naschon begate Salmon.  
 21 Salmon begate Boaz, Boaz begate Hobed.  
 22 Hobed begate Ishai, Ishai begate Dauid.



Now by the mercifull kindnesse of the Lord, we are come to the last part of this Historie, and the conclusion of this Chapter, where the holy Ghost describeth vnto vs the kindred of Boaz, euen all the generations, from Pharez to King Dauid: shewing vnto vs the encrease of these Iewes from their dwelling in the land of Canaan, before they went into Egypt, vntill the time that Dauid was annointed and appointed King in Israel: wee may for the easier handling of these words, diuide them into these two parts: The first is, those persons that were the progenitors, ancestors, or fathers of Boaz, in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth verses, which are set downe to be Pharez the first, Chetron the second, Ram the third, Hamminadab the fourth, Naschon the fifth, and Salmon

the sixt, who was the immediate and naturall father of *Boaz*. The second part is the progenie, of-spring, and children of *Boaz*, which succeeded him: first, *Hobed*, secondly, *Ishai*, and thirdly, *Dauid* the King. Of these parts and persons, let vs briefly speake; so much as serueth for the exposition of the Scripture, and the satisfying of the time, through the assistance and helpe of the Spirit of God.

2 *These are the generations.* Now that the holy Ghost had declared vnto vs this history of *Ruth*, though briefly and in a few words. yet in ample and large circumstances, for the vnderstanding of his minde: at the end hereof he annexeth the kindred of the persons, whom it chiefly concerneth, that he might shew vnto vs, that they were no meane or base persons, for whom this histore was compiled, but such as descended of the noblest family in all the world, who were the appointed fathers of many Kings, and that which is most of all, the persons, of whose Seed, our Sauour Iesus Christ tooke the beginning and substance of his humane nature. And therefore in this place we must declare the causes that mooued the holy Ghost to be so carefull in the rehearsing of the Genealogies of the Fathers; for we must not imagine, that he mustereth the names of those ancient persons, to worke any wonder in our mindes at the recitall of them, or that the Scripture could haue beene perfect without the seuerall generations therein described: but wee must know that there were diuers necessarie and waightie causes by the iudgement of the ancientest and most approued Writers, which moued the Spirit of God to interseret these Genealogies.

3 First, therefore according to the condition of all mankind, there is equally described the generations both of the godly and vngodly in the Scriptures, for this cause to shew the multiplication of mankind: of this sort are the generations of *Adam*, *Setb* and *Cain*, reported by *Moses*, that hearing the number of mankind so quickly multiplied, wee might the more earnestly

earnestly giue praise vnto God: Againe, the Genealogies of the sonnes of *Noah* are described vnto vs: to shew the replenishing of the earth, the destruction of countries, and the restoring of the world: But to come neerer vnto the matter, wee must take this for a generall rule, that the Genealogies of the wicked are reported in the Scripture for to shew the blessing and loue of God vpon the godly and righteous men: as for example, the Lord reckoneth vp the posteritie of *Ismael*, the sonne of the bond-vvoman, shewing vs how great a people he became, and how many Dukes or Princes proceeded out of his loynes, to shew vnto vs the promise and couenant vvhich hee made to his Father *Abraham*, that he should bee a great people, vvas fulfilled, and this serued to magnifie and exalt the name of godly *Abraham*. Wee reade that the Lord bestoweth a great Genealogie vpon wicked *Esau*, or *Edom*, numbering or reckoning vp his sonnes, and his sonnes sonnes, his kingdome, and the Kings of his seede that raigned after him, for no other end, but to report and manifest the blessing vpon godly *Isaak* and *Rebecca* his parents, according to the oracle that hee gaue to his mother, vvhén shee demaunded and enquired the cause of the strugling and struiuing in her vvombe. The like may bee said of godlesse *Cham*, for *Noah* his fathers sake, of the sonnes of *Iacob* for *Isaaks* sake, of *Ephraim* and *Manasses* for *Iosephs* sake. By the which wee gather, and note this excellent doctrine, that if the wicked haue any good, it is for the sake of their godly and righteous parents or friends.

4 We see they should not haue so much as a name in the booke of God, were it not for the cause of the righteous and godly: Wee reade that when the Sodomites were overcome in warre, their people led captiues, and their goods spoiled by the company of *Chedorlaomer*, then for *Lois* sake the people stirred vp *Abraham*, and armed him with men and courage, who wonne the victory, recovered the spoile, brought backe

Gen. 10.

Gen. 25. 13.  
16.

Gen. 21. 13.

Gen. 36.

Gen. 25. 23.

Gen. 14. 16.

the prisoners, restored their goods, and gaue them all libertie, for Godly *Lots* sake, who was shortly after despised by them, but they for their wickednesse were burned in brimstone, when righteous *Lot* was deliuered from them. If *Ioseph* had not beene, they had had no corne in Egypt: if *Moses* had not beene, the Lord had often destroyed the Israelites, while they wandered and wauered in the wilderness. For *Iacobs* sake, the Lord encreased the flocks of *Laban*: for *Iosephes* sake, he blessed the affaires of *Potiphar*: For *Pauls* sake, he saued all them that suffered shipwrack at Miletum. Euen so also he blessed the house of *Obid-edom*, because the Arke was kept therein, and at this day giueth greatest peace to those countries, where his Gospell is promoted. Let the Atheists thinke, if there were none that feared God, they should quickly bee condemned: let the drunkards know, if there were not some temperate persons, their bodies should be quickly consumed, let the couetous wretches assure themselves, if there were not some liberall men, their owne goods would turne to their death: let the prophaners of Sabbaths remember, that if there were not some sanctifiers thereof, their delightful vanities would long ago haue wrought their sorrowfull destinies: let the contentious plain-tifes be certified, that if there were not some peaceable Christians among them, their wealth had long agoe beene wasted, for the prayers of the faithfull are like the walled Cities against the rage of the enemies, to keepe the vengeance of the Lord from falling vpon vs: as the blood of the Lambe spotted vpon the postes of the Israelites houses, caused the Angell to passe by them: when all the first-borne in Egypt were slaine, euen so the blood of the Lambe of God, which is shed in the hearts of the godly, maketh his messengers of death to depart from our countrie and kingdome.

§ It there were not a remnant among vs, that are in league with the Lord, that dailie are hearers of the Word, the beseechers for his mercie, and as the ambassadours of peace to dissuade him from punishing our

our contempt of his Word with condemnation, our abuse of his creatures into pining famine, our wantonnesse and peace into lamentable warres, our riotous liues into forren captiuitie, and our pampered bodies to the slaughter of the sword. You, euen you, that blaspheme the name of God, if there were not a number that reprove your abominations, the heauens would raine downe stones to reuenge your accursed tongues: you, euen you that spend the Sabbathes in dancing and playing, if there were not a company that refraine your pollutions, you had beene cut off from your pleasure with some fearefull death, before you had passed these many daies of securitie: you, euen you, that thinke the preaching of the Gospell like the voyce of one that singeth, whereunto you owe no more obedience, then eare-seruice: if there were not a remnant that heard the Word of Power, which they beleue is able to saue their soules, you had beene many yeares since, suffering the reward of such impious infidelitie. What stayeth the Lord from comming to iudgement, but the faithfull and elect company: what keepeth you in your possessions, reuenues, and lands, but the poore Saints of God, who are hardly admitted to the tables of your seruants, who pray for the encrease of your wealth, the prosperitie of your liues, the feeding of your bodies, and the continuance of your honor, but these despised persons, who haue entered a couenant for your daily wel-fare with the King of heauen and earth.

6 They are the flocke, for whose sake you haue the wooll to cloath you, and your milke to feede you; they are the Bees, for whose sake you enioy the hony for your delight, and the hony-combe for the pleasure of your meate: they are the birdes, which haue builded vp your pallaces and houses of rest, for the defence of your weaknesse: they are the oxen that bring your corne to your barnes, and your store into your garners: they are the beasts, that beare you out of the dangers in safetie, and deliuer your liues from trouble. Final-



ly, there is not an Usurer, but he hath his money for their sake: there is not a Gentleman, but hee hath his lands for their sake: there is not a Prince, but he hath his Crowne for their sake: there is not a rich man, but he hath his wealth for their sake: there is not a Minister, but he preacheth for their sake: and there should be no peace, prosperitie, or plentie, if it were not for them, for the Angels are their seruants, the earth is their maintenance, and heauen is their inheritance: bee assured therefore, beloued, if righteous *Lot* goe out of *Sodome*, or godly *Noah* into his Arke, then fire vwill fall from heauen, and the depthes vwill open their fountaines of vvater to burne and destroy the vvorld: euen so, if the Lord take avway the righteous from among vs, then, euen then presently, shall follow the destruction of our countrey, the consuming of our Kingdome, the confusion of the vvorld, and the condemning of the reprobate, and therefore let vs make much of them, in vvhom we see any hope of Religion, for they are the right heires of the world, and you that haue their lands, are but ouerscers of their fathers testaments, and therefore shall giue an account of their possessions to them when they come to age, and bee answerable for euery farthing which you spent not vpon them.

7 Secondly, another cause of their Genealogies, or recitall of generations in the Scripture, is for the Chronologies or noting of seuerall times, vvherein euery vvorthie thing vvas done, and how the vvorld grew in yeares, and the mercie of God in sparing the vvicked liues of so many godlesse men, and chusing but one familie among all the vvorld, vvith vvhom hee vvould establish his couenant: for this cause in the Genealogie of *Adam*, vvee reade how long hee and euery one of his children liued, to shew how long the Lord suffered the wicked before hee brought the Flood, and in what age of the world the same overflowed, which by the Genealogies there set downe, appeareth to be in the yeare of the world, one thousand,

*Gen. 5.*

sand, sixe hundred, fiftie and sixe, when *Noah* was sixe hundred yeares old. Againe, we reade in the Genealogie of *Sem*, by the supputation of the yeares therein mentioned, how long after the Flood: *Abraham* vvas called from his countrey, and receiued the couenant of promise, concerning the incarnation of Iesus Christ, and the saluation of the world. The same may bee said of the often repetition of the age of *Abraham*, as at his calling, at the time of his circumcision, at the birth of *Isaak*, and at his death, which giueth a great light to euery part of the Scripture, for thereby the occasions of many excellent histories are taken, the darke places are opened, the faithfull are confirmed, and the Church of God instructed of her age, and her continuance of her members, and her condition, vvhich is subiect to many and often changes. Sometimes her glorie is greater, as in the first age, sometimes lesser, as in *Abrahams* time, sometimes afflicted, as the estate of *Iacob* in Egypt, and all his children testifieth: sometimes without any knowne and publike Ministerie, or offices, as till *Aarons* dayes, sometimes without any ciuill or politike gouernment, as in the time of all the Patriarkes, sometimes without peace in persecution, as in the time of the Iudges, vvherein these persons heere named, liued, and sometime in most flourishing estate, as vnder *David*, *Salomon*, *Asa*, *Iosiah*, and such like. By the which we gather, that it neuer standeth in one stay, but either encreaseth or decreaseth, ebbeth or floweth, riseth or falleth, waxeth or wayneth: therefore herein lieth the great comfort of the godly, euen in these troublesome dayes (but yet the best that euer are to bee looked for in this earth) wherein they see the ancient to depart, and new men in their roome, one generation commeth, and another goeth, iniquity aduanced, coldnes in Religion embraced, dissimulation and hypocrisie maintained, warres and persecution threatned to the Gospell: Schismes defended, errors inuented, the world blinded, the truth declined, godlines defaced, and the Church of God disquieted,

Gen. 11.

Gen. 12. 3.  
Gen. 17. 24

quieted, with a thousand greater calamities: this all the Fathers suffered before vs, and this we their children must also abide, onely herein let vs reioyce, that wee shall bee accounted worthie to suffer for Christ, and that our names are written in the kingdome of heauen.

*Luke 3.23.*

8 Thirdly, and lastly, the especiall cause of this Genealogie, and of all the Fathers and children of *Abraham* in one kindred, was for to shew the naturall descent of Christ from *Adam*, and so forth vnto the Virgin *Mary*: for seeing he was to be incarnated, it behoued that his parentage should be described from the beginning of the world: for this cause, *Luke* the Euangelist, gathered together the seuerall descriptions of all the Genealogies pertaining to Christ, throughout all the whole Scripture, as a necessarie ground of the Gospell, to declare the kindred of our Saviour from the beginning of the world, whereof these persons mentioned in this place are apart, from whence he tooke them into his number.

*Gen. 3.15.*

*Gen. 9.9.*

Now lest any man should thinke, that the birth of Christ should be obscure, and the taking vpon him the flesh of mankind, should bee vncertaine, as well to conuince all errors that arose about his humanitie, as to testifie the nobilitie of his birth, and worthinesse of his parentage, the persons of whom he descended, are in many bookes of the Scripture seuerally named, and not without great commendation. For this family of Christ had many and speciall blessings, which were the armes of the same, by which it was distinguished from all other. In *Adam* it had this promise, that the seed of the woman should breake the Serpents head; meaning, that Christ which should be borne of a woman, should overcome the force of the Diuell. In *Noah* it had this promise, that the covenant of God should be established with him and his seed, meaning that his promise which he had made vnto *Adam*, should be performed in his posteritie, which was for the coming of Christ. This promise was renewed vnto *Abraham*, vnto *Isaac*, and  
vn.o

vnto *Iacob*, and most plainiy vnto *Iudah*, the third sonne of *Jacob*, who was the father and grand-father of this *Pharez*, that the Tribe shall not depart from *Iudah*, nor the Law-giuer from betweene his feete, vntill *Shiloh* come, and the people shall be gathered vnto him: and againe vnto *Dauid* he spoke, that the fruit of his bodie should sit vpon his Throne; both which promises or propheties, respect the comming and the raigne of Christ.

9 By this then we first of all gather the scope of the whole Scripture, namely, that aboue all other it respecteth Iesus Christ the Sonne of God, and Sauour of the world, the Prince of peace, the migraie King, and the great Counsellor. For this cause he himselfe speaketh to the Iewes, *Search the Scriptures, for in them you thinke to haue eternall life, and they are they that testifie of me.* Again, *Iohn* speaketh in the end of the Gospell, that the Scripture was written that we might belecue in Christ. And we reade that *Apollus* did mightily confound the Iewes, prouing by the Scriptures that Iesus was Christ. But most euident and plaine is that of the Disciples going to *Emaus*, and Iesus ouer-taking them by the way, it is said, that he began at *Moses* and all the Prophets, shewing them, that Christ ought so to suffer, and that redemption and remission of sinnes, might be preached in his name to all the world. By the which it is most easie to be gathered, and doth most necessarily follow, that the summe, drift, and scope of the Scripture, dependeth vpon Christ. First, because all the godly that are named therein, were either his Fathers according to the flesh, or else singular types prefiguring his person, such was *Melchizedeck*, *Ioseph*, *Moses*, and all the Iudges: *Samuel* and the Prophets, which although they were not of his naturall linage, (*Melchizedeck* excepted) yet they did most liuely represent him; *Moses* and the Iudges, in this, that as they deliuered the people from earthly captiuitie, so should he redeeme them from euerlasting calamitie. *Samuel* and the Prophets in this, that as they instructed the Iewes

*Gen. 29. 10*

*Psal. 132. 11*

*Ioh. 5. 39.*

*Iob. 20. 31.*

*Act. 18. 28.*

*Luke 24. 27. to 46.*

Iewes in the law of the Lord, which was giuen to *Moses*, so Christ should put his law in the inward parts of the Church, and teach them the Gospell of truth, their redemption wrought by himselfe, the law of righteousness, the vwords of eternall life. *Aaron* and his fellowes in this, that as they sacrificed for the sinnes of the people with bullockes and beasts, and sprinkled the blood with hysope for their outward cleansing, so Christ sacrificeth his owne bodie, and cleanseth from sinne, through the sprinkling of his owne blood. *Dauid* and the Kings in this, that as they ruled the people by their temporall lawes, conquering their enemies, and giuing them rest and worldly honour: so Christ doth raigne with the spirituall law of his Word, triumphing ouer hell, death, and Satan, leading captiuitie captiue, ascending vp on high, receiuing gifts for men, deliuering his Church from their aduersarie the Diuell, bestowing vpon them spirituall peace and libertie, giuing them the honours of his Ministerie, Word, and Sacraments, in this life present, and Crownes of glorie in the life to come. Thus if wee looke vpon the Iudges, they shew vs our redemption. If vvee looke vpon the Kings, they shew vs our saluation. If we looke vpon the Prophets, they shew vs our instruction. If we looke vpon the Priests, they shew vs our reconciliation, and if we looke vpon the very names of the Fathers of Christ, which are described in the old Testament, they teach vs that our names are also described in heauen, and this is the profit we reape by the generation or Genealogie of the faithfull, to confirme vnto vs the true humanitie of our Sauour.

10 So that herein most liuely appeareth the dignitie of the Scriptures, and the Maiestie of Christ, one mutually looking on another, as the Sunne doth the Starres, and the Starres the Sunne, for as the excellencie of the Sunne appeareth by the glory of the Starres, to whom it giueth light, so the Maiestie of Christ is manifest by the Scriptures, to whom hee giueth credit: On the other side, as the glory of the Starre is magnified,



sied, because it is the light of the Sunne, so the credit of the Scriptures is exalted, because they concerne the Son of God. If the doings of earthly men be but painted in some pamphlets, tragedies, or bookes of chronicles, we account them famous, because their actions are commended to print: what shall we then say of the Son of God? whose workes excell the worthiest enterprises of all the world together, and are recorded by the holy Ghost, the eternall God of truth, throughout all the sacred bookes of his eternall word, farre aboue the credit of worldly commendations, is not his Maiestie incomparable? Do we buy the bookes of earthly mens deuises, to reade the fained and doubtfull aduentures of Princes long since in their graues, and shall wee suffer this booke of the heauenly stratagems of our Sauour lie asleepe in the thops? Compare their worthines together, you shall finde the difference as great, as is betweene the light of the Sunne, and a little rotten wood glistering in the darke. They ouercame some worldly Princes, but he ouercame the Prince of the whole world: they through a multitude of earthly souldiers, but he through himselfe alone, an infinite number of infernall powers: they inuented politicke lawes for their peaceable gouernment, but hee giueth spirituall precepts, and ruleth by them the hearts of men himselfe: they had the heads of many noble persons vncouered at their presence, but hee hath the tongues and knees of all them in heauen, in earth, and vnder the earth, bowing vnto him, yea, the Angels do him reuerence, for he is their head: they prepared nauies of ships to cut the seas, but he could command the waters to beare him vp, when he walked vpon them: they had their glory in gold, siluer, precious stones, and soft apparel, but he being on earth, had his countenance like the brightnesse of the Sunne, and his garments as white as the light: they could digge in the earth to finde treasures for their maintenance, but he commanded the fishes of the sea to render him his want: they were able vpon infinite charges, to keepe great families,



lies, but he without any charge fed five thousand men, besides women and children, with a few barley loaves and two fishes, and caused much more to be taken vp, then at the first was diuided among them: finally, they were able to destroy the bodies of men, but he is able to destroy both body and soule, they shewed themselves in outward glory, but hee shall shew himselfe in flaming fire, to render vengeance to all them that haue not obeyed his Gospell.

11 Therefore, heere must we learne the Maiesty of Christ euen in the Scriptures, who was promised to these Fathers, appeared in their flesh, satisfied for our sinnes, to whom all the Scriptures giue witness, that he shall be the Iudge of Princes, and subiects liuing and dead. Vnto whom we must giue reuerence, as to his Maiestie appertaineth, for euen now he beholdeth with what feare we heare his Word, with what loue we receiue it, with what hunger wee desire it, and with what conscience wee will practise it. Oh come let vs kisse the Sonne lest he be angrie, let vs wash his feete with the teares of our eyes, and wipe them with the haire of our head. Let vs sue to him, for he is the Iudge, we are the rebels, he the Sauiour, and we the slaues. Against him onely haue we sinned, by contemning his Maiestie, prophaning his Sabbaths, blaspheming his honor, disobeying his Gospell, and treading the parden of our soules vnder the feete of our pleasures: therefore while we haue time, let vs loue his Truth, receiue his Gospell, beleue his Word, sanctifie his Sabbathes, magnifie his name, reuerence his Ministers, and repent vs of our sinnes.

12 *Pharez begate Chetron.* Now after the causes of the Genealogies described, and the vse of them, gathered out of the word of God and godly Writers, we must proceed to the speciall persons heere mentioned, for whose sake the former hath bene spoken, wee shewed you in the beginning, that these generations were some of them before Boaz, and some after him, as his children, and this we must put you againe in mind of, that  
heere

heere is handled the Genealogie of Christ. In the which this seemeth doubtfull, that he beginneth with *Pharez*, what should moue him thereunto, seeing (as alreadie wee shewed you) that this *Pharez* was an incestuous birth: and therefore to common reason, it seemeth much more commendable that he should haue beene vtterly blotted out of the note of these Fathers, or else the Genealogie should haue been further repeated, as from *Abraham* or *Noah*, and so the consideration of his birth might haue beene hindred, through the company of other godly Fathers. Vnto which I briefly answer, that for this cause he beginneth at *Pharez*, for the better vnderstanding of the prayers of the Elders, in the twelfth verse, which desired that the house of *Boaz* might be like the house of *Pharez*, whom *Thamar* bare vnto *Iudah*; wherefore at the end of this Historie, the Author annexeth the description of the house of *Pharez* and of *Boaz*, for whom they prayed, vnto the third generation. So that in those dayes, most commendable was the posteritie of *Pharez*, for they were the chiefe of the Tribe of *Iudah*, because this *Pharez* was by nature the heire of the birth-right of *Iudah*, because he was the sonne of *Thamar*, the widow of *Iudah*, his eldest sonne. Againe, the Scripture is not wont to couer the faults of the dearest children of God, neither doth the holy Ghost euer conceale the sinnes of the godly. It telleth vs of the drunkenness of *Noah*, the incest of *Lot*, the vnlawfull oath that *Ioseph* swore to his brethren (by the life of *Pharao*) the adulterie of *David*, the distrust of King *Aza*, the fellowship that good King *Iehosaphat* had with wicked *Ahab*, and *Peters* deniall. At all these the Spirit of God neuer standeth, but indicteth them of their sinnes, though he giue them their pardon by Christ.

13 But wee must know further, that the Spirit of God so ruled the pen-writers of the Scriptures, that he suffered them not to omit the grieuous sinnes of themselves, their fathers and children: as for example, *Leui* was the great grand-father of *Moses*, which was the

Exod. 20.

Gen. 49. 7.

Iob 4.

first writer of the Scripture, yet he setteth downe the curse that the Lord pronounced by *Iacob* against him for the slaughter of the *Sichemites*. Likewise, it is held of euery one, that *Iob* was the writer of his owne historie, yet how dorth he lay open his owne corruptions, cursing his birth, accusing God of iniustice, and desiring to pleade with him. Moreouer, *Samuel* wrote his owne historie, especially the greatest part of the first booke, yet he layeth out the corruptions of his sonnes in the gouernment of the people, and how wicked they were, for whose sake the people were driuen to desire a King: the like may be said of many other, whose cursed sinnes are by themselves detected, being not ashamed to confesse them, as they were not to commit them, but thus the godly are their owne iudges to condemne their owne sinnes, for they know if they condemne themselves, they shall not bee condemned of God. They say with the prodigall sonne, that they haue sinned against heauen and against earth, and are no more worthy to be called the sonnes of God: they say with *Paul*, that they are the greatest of all sinners, and therefore haue receiued the greater mercy: they say with the man in the Gospell, *I am not worthy that thou shouldest come into my house*: and euermore they lay the worst side of their garments outward, that they might be more vile in their owne eyes, more fearefull to sinne, more louing to God his mercies, more humble in the world, and more hunger for righteousness.

14 Cast away therefore, if you be the children of God, this shame to acknowledge the infirmities wherewithall you are infected, for he that confesseth not his sinnes, euen to his brethren, can neuer confesse the mercies of God to himselfe. Hee that commendeth a Physitian, telleth what dangerous sicknesse he deliuered him out; and he that will commend Christ the Physitian of our soules, must tell what sinnes his soule was sicke of, and how his Sauour hath deliuered him: but yet alway remember that no man is bound ypon necessitie to declare his particular sinnes, except when his

his conscience is grieved for them, that he may receiue comfort, or when he must satisfie the iniuries he hath done to his neighbours. But we must learne not once to despise any penitent sinners, but rather embrace them, or lay them in our owne bosomes, they are the sheepe which wandered, but now is found, the goat which was lost, but now is recouered; and the branches which were dead, and now are Greene, for the Angels reioyce for them, Christ died for them, heauen is prepared for them, and we must pray for them. We haue heard alreadie that this *Pharez* was the incestuous son of *Iudah*: now if any aske why the Lord would take any part of such vngodly beginnings, I answere with *Paul*, that Christ came to saue sinners, that is, he was incarnated of incestuous progenitours, to shew vnto vs, that he could saue such of adulterous birthes, to shew vnto vs, that he could saue the children of adulterie; of Gentiles, such as *Ruth*, *Rabab*, and *Bathshebah* was, that he may shew vnto vs, he was the appointed Sauour of the Gentiles, because he vouchsafed to take his nature from them: for thus it becommeth him to fulfil all righteousness, to destroy the gates of hell, to deliuer his members from the thraldome of Satan, to gather together in one, from the East and West, North and South, all the children of Abraham, to enioy the presence of his maiestie, the inheritance of his kingdome, and the end of their faith, the saluation of their soules.

15 *Pharez begate Hezron*. Now we will briefly giue you the exposition of the names, and so make an end of this historie. *Pharez*, or rather *Peretz*, in Hebrew signifieth a diuision, and the occasion of this name was, because of the two twins in the wombe of *Thamar*, he first of all brake forth, and therefore they called him a diuision, from the time of his birth, he was borne in the land of Canaan: *Hezron* or *Chetron*, which was also borne in the land of Canaan, and the sonne of *Peretz*, who was borne about the time that the Israelites went into Egypt, and signifieth in our English tongue, the arrow of ioy, for till the Israelites went into Egypt, they

1. Tim. II. 5

Gen. 38. 25.  
Gen. 46. 12

Exec. 5. 63.

endured a great famine, which *Ezechiel* calleth the arrow of famine, and when they were deliuered from this famine, by going into Egypt for corne; the child being then borne, hee was called the arrow of ioy, as the famine is called the arrow of sorrow, as a remembrance of the mercie of God to them, in giuing them bread. *Ram* was the sonne of *Chetzyon*, and was borne in Egypt, about the time of *Iacobs* death, when the children of *Israel* began to be hated of the Egyptians, and therefore they called him *Ram*: which signifieth in our English tongue, cast downe, or cut off, because they then began to be afflicted, and saw, no doubt, great miserie like to fall vpon them, & they should be cast downe so soone as either the King or *Ioseph* should be dead. *Hamminadab* the sonne of *Ram*, was also borne in Egypt, about the time of *Iosephs* death, when he told the *Israelites* that the Lord would visit them, and deliuer them from the Egyptians, and it signifieth in our English tongue, a people that would be free, being compounded of three words, wherein the *Israelites* testifie the hope of their deliuerance, that although they were now in thraldome, yet they should be in freedome againe. *Nahashon* or *Nachschon*, the sonne of *Hamminadab*, was also borne in Egypt, a little before the departure of the *Israelites*, when they cried grieuously to the Lord for their afflictions, which they endured in Egypt vnder the Tax-masters, & it signifieth a crying or complaining, thereby noting in the name of the child, that he was borne in affliction, which might put him in mind of his fathers misery: this man, when the children of *Israel* were gone out of Egypt, and pitched their tents in the wilderness of *Sinai*, was by election or appointment of God, made the Prince of the whole Tribe: *Salmon* or *Shalmon*, the sonne of *Nachschon*, was borne after the *Israelites* were departed from Egypt, while they wandered in the desert, and were deliuered from the *Amalekites* and other their enemies, and his name signifieth peaceable, because they liued then peaceably, being freed from the Egyptians, and other calamities:

this

Gen. 50 24.  
Numb. 1. 1.  
and 7.



this man married with the victualer *Rachab* of Iericho, of whom hee begate *Boaz*. *Boaz* signifieth in strength, who was borne about the time of the deliuerance of the Iewes, from the tyranny of the Moabites by the hand of lame *Ehud*, by which meanes they got strength, and remained a long time in peace. *Obed* signifieth a seru-  
uant, who was borne as we see in *Ephra* *Bethlehem*, his mother being *Ruth* the Moabiteſſe, the women gaue him his name, becauſe he ſhould ſerue for the raiſing vp of *Elimelech*s familie, the reſtoring of *Naomies* life, and the comfort of his parents, *Boaz* and *Ruth*: *Iſſai* or *Iſh*ai, the ſonne of *Obed*, ſignifieth an oblation, and was borne about the daies of *Iſt*bach, and it may be he had his name giuen by reaſon of the vow of *Iſt*bach, when he went againſt the Hammonites, that he would offer the firſt liuing thing that met him, after hee returned with the victorie, whereupon his daughter meeting him, ſhe liued in perpetuall virginitie. *Dauid* the yong-  
eſt ſonne of *Iſſai*, who, no doubt, was borne in the time of *Heli*, ſignifieth beloued, becauſe commonly the yongeſt are beſt beloued, or elſe his name did proph-  
ſie that he ſhould be ſo beloued with God, with whom he would eſtabliſh his couenant concerning Chriſt, and aduance him to the Kingdome. By which we may plain-  
ly ſee, that this hitorie was written after he was cho-  
ſen from his brethren, and annointed to be King after *Saul*, or elſe the eldeſt ſonne of *Iſſai* ſhould haue been named, becauſe of his birth-right belonged to him.

Matth. 1. 9.

Iud. 3. 16.

16 Laſtly, by this we may gather, that the foundation of the Goſpell muſt bee ſearched for in the old Teſta-  
ment for their Genealogie, as all the other of Chriſt is taken from thence: and the Apoſtle defining the Goſ-  
pell, ſaith that God had promiſed it before by the Pro-  
phets, in the holy Scriptures, that is, in the old Teſta-  
ment; and therefore it was needfull for *Matthew* to be-  
gin his Goſpel with the Genealogie of Chriſt, from *A-*  
*braham* and *Dauid*, who had moſt liuely promiſes of his  
incarnation; alſo *Mark* and *Luke* begin with *Iohn Baptiſt*,  
who was the promiſed *Eliab*, and the fore-runner of  
Chriſt,

Rom. 1. 2.



Christ, according as before it was prophesied, and fetcheth it from the Creation and beginning of the world, as it appeareth in the entrance of his Gospel. By which we may see the hope of the Fathers for the coming of Christ, to be the same with ours, and had the liuely promises thereof reuealed in the Law and the Prophets. Secondly, the heavenly agreement that is betwene the old Testament and the new, for there he was promised, thence he was proued to be the Messiah, all the Prophets giue witness vnto him, now he is exhibited, humbled, and aduanced to the highest degree, the gouernment, heauen and earth: sitting at the right hand of God, making intercession for his Saints, working in the calling of his seruants, with the ministerie of his Word, disposing all things to the damnation of the wicked, and the saluation of the godly. Now let vs  
 giue praise to  
 God.

*FINIS.*

